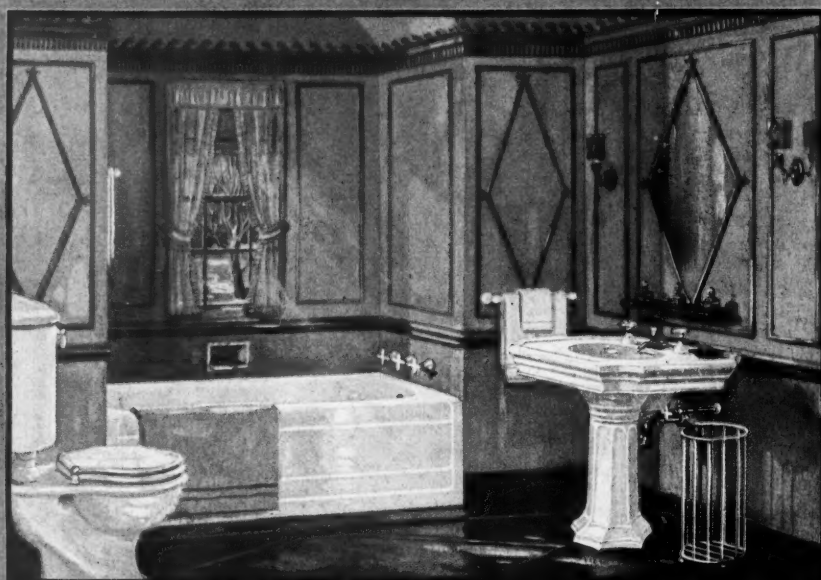


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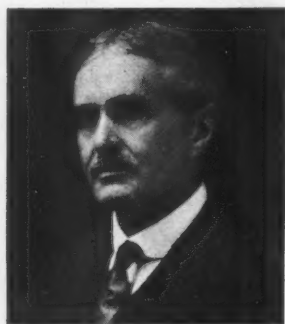
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for November, 1926



NEXT MONTH— The Bacchante

*A Daring Novel of London's Bohemia—
and of a Woman who fought a
Devil Within Herself*

By **ROBERT HICHENS**
Author of "The Garden of Allah"

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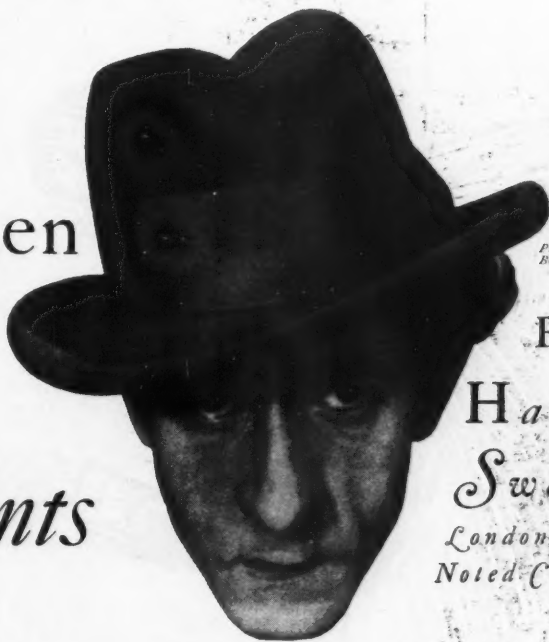
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COSMOPOLITAN

In My
45 Years
I Have Broken
8 of the
Commandments

Photo by
Beck & MacGregor

By
Hannen
Swaffer
London's Most
Noted Columnist

IN EXACTLY forty-five years I shall be exactly ninety years old. I am old enough to have left off choosing the spot where my statue is to stand; I am young enough not to have begun to choose where, in my grave, I myself am to lie.

At the age of forty-five I find, after due reflection, that I have broken all the ten commandments except two—that referring to murder, which wants a lot of energy, and that which refers to covetousness, which is something I could never understand.

I am perfectly satisfied with my bank balance, which is \$20,000, neither too large nor too small. If I had more, I should only invest it; and you know how unpopular you become then.

I have done, in my life, all those things I wanted to do, because all of us always do that. And I have not done any of those things I did not want to do, which is true, I think, of us all. If you want to do anything in this world very much, you can always do it; if you don't want to, nothing on earth can make you.

I find, to my surprise, that in the middle of middle age I still believe in God, although I have received every organized inducement not to believe in anything. I believe in Him although I do not see His purpose working itself out anywhere; nor have I ever noticed, yet, any proof of His existence. The evidence in the minds of men is all to the contrary. If we were made in His likeness, that alone would seem to disprove it.

So far as I can remember, I have never done one thing in forty-five years that seems to have been of lasting benefit to the world. I do not remember one act of kindness which cost me anything, nor one sacrifice that did anybody else any good.

On the other hand, I do not remember that I was ever cruel enough to anything for it to matter much, nor that I ever did very serious harm to anything or anybody. I do not regret anything, particularly; nor do I find cause for pride over any one achievement.

If I have sinned, I still feel I have plenty of time for repentance. I felt that, no doubt, twenty-five years ago; twenty-five years hence, perhaps, I shall still think this.

I am, you see, an average man.

I never started a war; but, on the other hand, I have never tried to stop one. I have never murdered anybody; but, also, I have never prevented anyone else from murdering anybody. I have seen several people well on their way to doing it; but I do not remember warning them.

I have traveled a great deal and I find to my dismay that, more or less, people are the same all over the world. I mean that they think all the same things but do not know it. But they don't know what they think, and they don't think what they know. Most of them don't think, and don't know.

I find that, the more you think your own country is better than anybody else's, the worse it is; and I also find that, the worse it is, the more you want to make other countries like it by conquering them, and then saying it is progress.

I have never kept a diary. I have never sent a valentine. I regard Christmas cards merely as something to put my picture on, to advertise myself. And I notice that whenever I tell people how clever I am, they always agree with me, and that when I don't, people don't notice it. I hate arguing with people because I find that all they have to say in reply to me is what I found out was wrong years ago. Besides, it bores me, to realize that, as a rule, they are still replying to something I said half an hour before, since when I have changed my opinion.

I do not belong to any political party because no political party belongs to me. If I couldn't find, I shouldn't follow anything.

NOTICE that if I talk cleverly when I am sitting down, people do not notice it, but that when I talk nonsense standing up, people say how brilliant I am.

That's why I envy penguins. They can stand up and sit down at the same time.

And I notice that, the moment you get in one place, you have to go to another place. The more it is like the place you are in, the more you want to go.

It is strange how we go on wanting things that we have not got, although we all know that, when we have got them, we shan't want them. And it is funny how, the more things we have got which we don't want, the more other people think how lucky we are.

I don't think it took me forty-five years to learn all this, because it is the sort of knowledge they all knew before I came here.

But then, the strange thing about life is that, never mind how much knowledge there was before we were born, we all have to learn it all over again for ourselves, each one of us, at great cost, and with great pain.

B y C H A R L E S



The Gay

S DANA GIBSON



Deceivers

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OPPORTUNITY*

Since

*"The
Little French
Girl"*

to read a

New Novel

by

*ANNE
DOUGLAS
SEDGWICK*

*Here she tells beautifully the
Story of a Man Who Could—
and Did—Love Two Women*

"YOU are an artist, monsieur?"

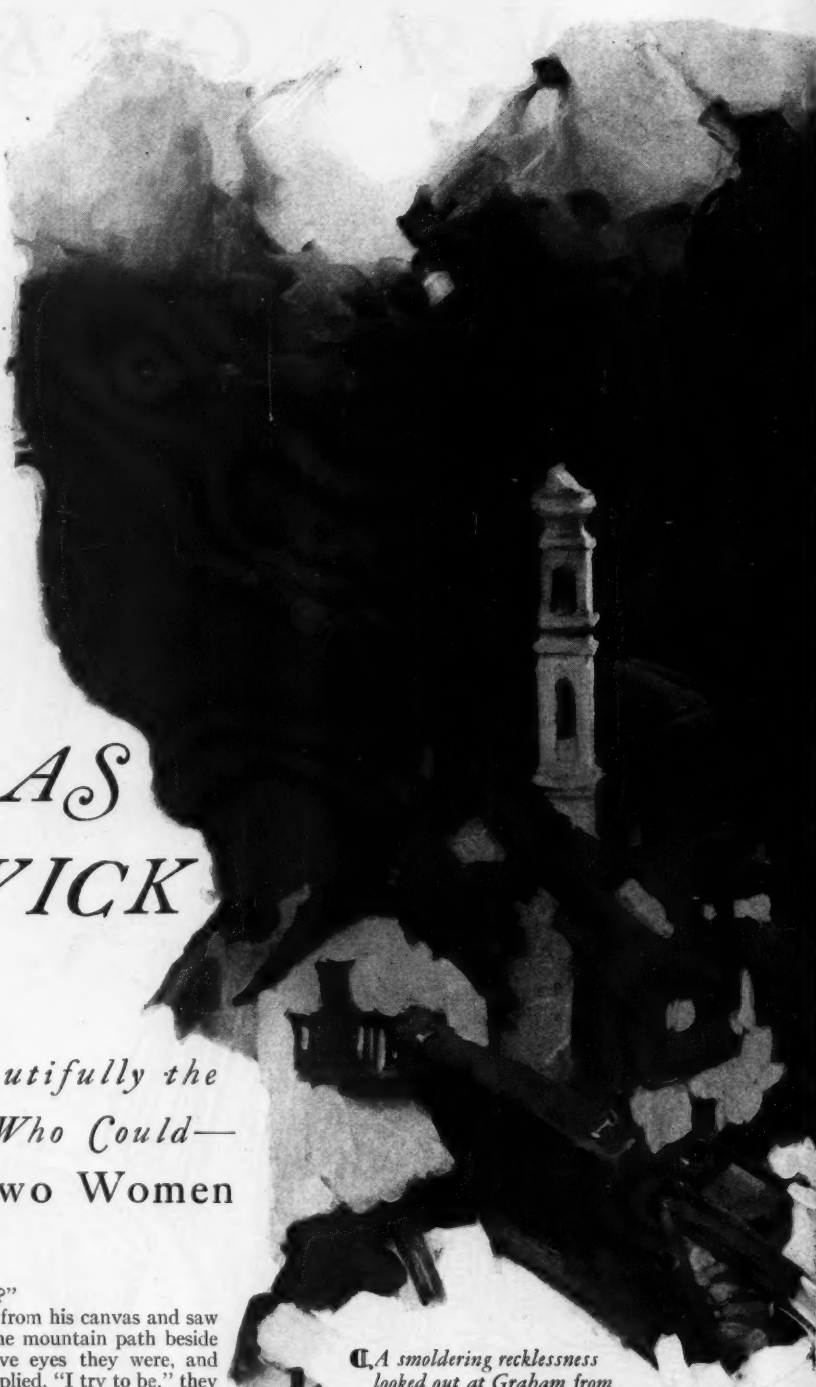
Graham raised his eyes from his canvas and saw an old lady standing in the mountain path beside him. Gloomy, unresponsive eyes they were, and they did not soften for her; yet as he replied, "I try to be," they remained fixed upon her; for she was a surprising apparition.

Against the blue autumnal sky it was a Goya she made him think of; festive and sinister with her black ribbons and laces, her pallid painted face and great owl-like eyes. She leaned, witch-like, on an ebony stick, and a broad hat, edged with lace, tied, from beneath the brim, under her chin. Blue, black, sallow-white, in color and design the picture of her was wonderful; and her eyes were wonderful; so old, yet so living and liquid, one iris half veiled by a piteous droop of the eyelid.

Graham continued to gaze at her, noting further that, though stately, she was frayed and almost dingy; her black kid boot gaped at the ankle where a button lacked and the laces at her wrist were tattered. She was so old that she might, in youth, have been a beauty of the Second Empire; yet that she was still susceptible to male attention was made evident to him by the faintly provocative smile that hovered on her withered lips.

"You have made it very menacing," she now remarked.

Her eyes were on him; his painting, he saw, was a mere pretext; yet she must have looked at it, and pretty carefully, before

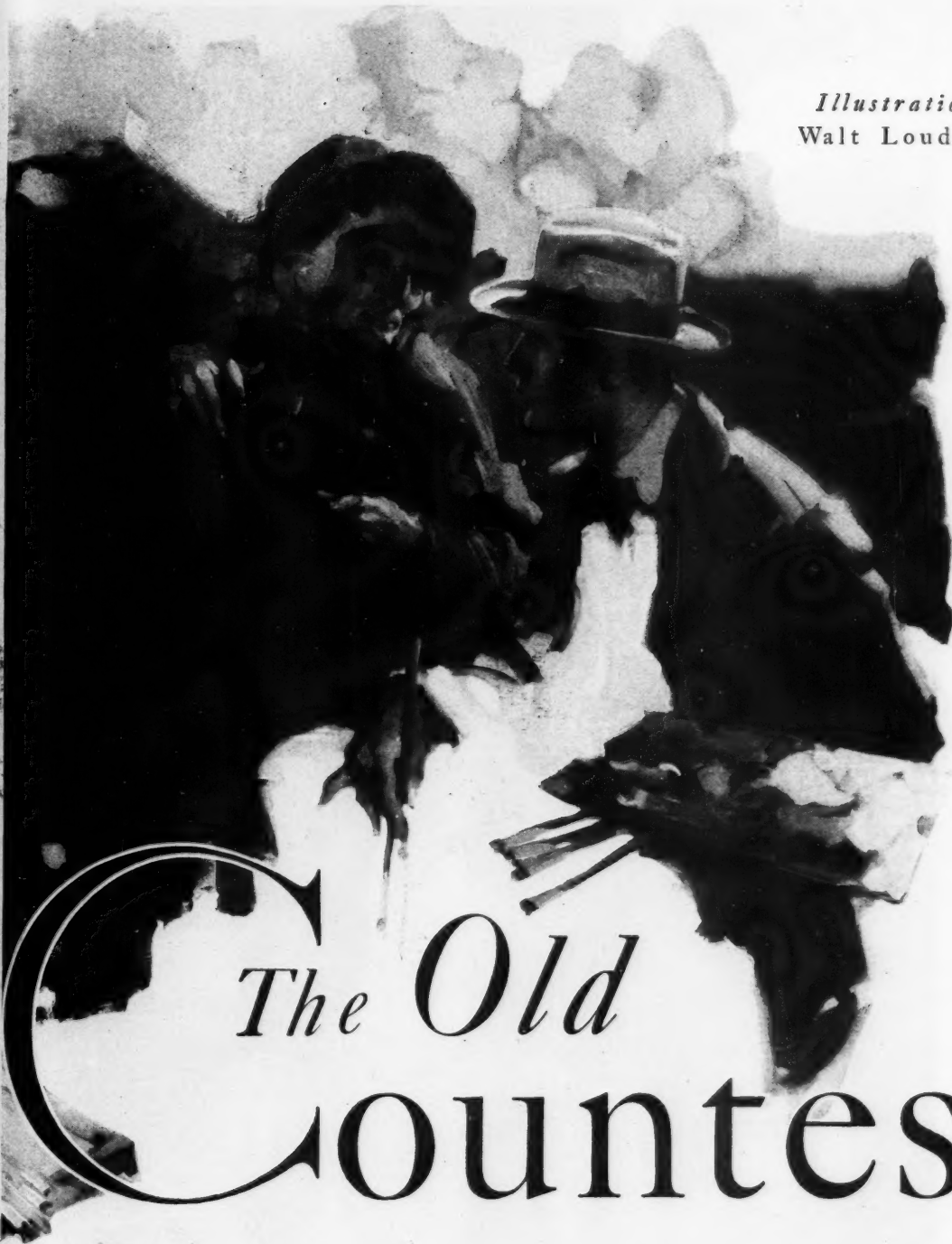


*A smoldering recklessness
looked out at Graham from
the old lady's eyes, and his
own dark fires answered it.*

addressing him, for such a comment, from an old lady of the Second Empire, showed discernment.

"Menacing? What do you mean by that?" he questioned. He remained seated, mannerlessly enough; and he looked away from her to his picture, and then out over the majestic spaces of sky and cliff and river. Perched high as they were on the precipitous hillside it was also against the sky that the old lady saw him and she might well divine that when he looked at the landscape he forgot her.

Richard Graham was admirably handsome. The modeling of his brows and eyelids was Napoleonic and something also in the folded, ironic melancholy of his lips, his cold and brooding aspect; but his face showed no further Latin subtleties and his rough, dark locks, short but ample nose, broad irises and powerful throat, gave to his head, in certain attitudes, a look of Robert



Illustrations by
Walt Louderback

The Old Countess

Burns. He wore exceedingly well-cut coat and trousers of thin gray homespun; a white silk shirt with his initials embroidered on the breast pocket; blue socks; blue silk handkerchief, and sleeve-links of flat gold; on all of which details the old lady's eyes rested, successively and with an almost passionate attention. His demeanor was that of an artist but his dress that of a man of fashion.

But he looked back at her, remembering her, and his question.

"Ah—to analyze a menace is difficult, is it not?" said the old lady, as he cast his dark glance again upon her. "Your sky is blue; it is full of sunlight; yet it is a tragic sky."

"I always feel the sky in France rather tragic," said Graham. "It seems to relegate us; to have no use for us; none of the complicity that one feels in our caressing English skies."

"Ah; I thought you English—though your French is so excellent. Perhaps that is what I felt in your picture. It relegates us. And not only its sky. Your very river is merciless. Though

indeed one does not expect mercy from a great river such as our Dordogne."

"It's marvelous," said Graham, gazing again before him. It was marvelous. He never recovered from the shock of splendor each seeing of it brought. Winding in majesty between its vast gray cliffs, its wooded gorges, it was to the earth what an eagle is to the sky; a presence; a power; possessing what encompasses it.

The old lady recalled his gaze.

"And it can be merciless indeed. During the years that I have lived here I have seen three inundations. Corpses have rolled upon its flood."

"Corpses? Really?" Graham laughed a little, looking up at her. She was probably a romancing old lady and the quality went with something meretricious he felt in her voice, dulcetly, beautifully as that enshrined her perfect French. "Why didn't they get out of the way?"



CSomething brooding, remote, desolate, even, struck upon Jill with the sense of mys-
down the path toward him. But everything today was fairy-tale—the still garden,



ery that dear, familiar Dick at times roused in her. It was as if he expected to see someone walking the black form of the old lady—and Jill did not know whether she could have said it was a happy one.

"Ah, you do not know the force and fury of our great rivers when they are unchained by spring among the mountains. They can, suddenly, resistlessly, sweep all before them. They are, in that, like our French nation, led by a Napoleon. My maternal grandfather was one of Napoleon's marshals, monsieur. We are of plebeian blood on my mother's side; but I think I am prouder of that soldier of fortune than of my crusading ancestors. You fought in our Great War, monsieur?"

"Yes; I fought," said Graham. He was beginning to wish that she would move on. This wonderful French light enveloped one like an incantation; but it was October; the days were getting shorter; it would change if they went on talking too long.

"You are staying at our little Buissac, monsieur?" asked the old lady. She must guess that he wanted to go on painting; but she could not, yet, bring herself to leave him.

"Only for a week. We are on our way south."

"You are not alone?"

"My wife is with me."

"She is also an artist?"

"Far from it." Graham smiled a little, streaking a tentative color on his palette.

"She has other occupations while you paint?"

"She's fond of motoring. She's probably scouring the country at this moment." Graham laid on his color.

"It is a wild, a desolate country for a young woman to venture far afield in. You do not fear for her?"

"Fear for Jill!" Graham laughed. "She went through the war, too. She drove an ambulance in the firing-line most of the time. The Dordogne isn't likely to frighten her after that." He looked up at the old lady. "May I bring her to see you one day before we go? I should like to go on talking—but not now."

The old lady seemed for a moment arrested by this unconventionality. But her surprise was untouched by displeasure. Her smile, on the contrary, betrayed delight.

"I shall be most charmed to receive you. Come any day you please and you will find me waiting for you with a cup of tea; and it will be a cup of real tea, and at the proper time," smiled the old lady; "though I myself, from long seclusion, have lapsed into the habits of the province. I dine at midday, sup at dusk and go to bed with the birds; a sad existence; is it not, for a Parisienne?"

"That's all right, then," said Graham. "We'll come at tea-time. And where are we to come? And whom are we to ask for?"

"You must ask for the Comtesse de Lamouderie; at the *manoir*; anyone will direct you. It is down there I live; beyond Buissac; beyond the cemetery; in the midst of the chestnut forest. A road leads up from the *grande route*. I am afraid it is in terrible disrepair; your car could never attempt it. But it is not far. You could come on foot."

"If you can get as far as this—I think we certainly can!" laughed Graham. "And what about you? Do you feel it safe to wander about the country by yourself?" He had risen in farewell and doffed his hat.

"Oh, I!" the old lady laughed bitterly. "There are no dangers where I am concerned. I ceased to be a woman many years ago."

This, to Graham's Anglo-Saxon ears, was a piece of information as unexpected as it was unnecessary. He ignored her suggestion.

"You might break your leg, you know," he said. "You might meet a robber. Well, *au revoir*."

"I have nothing to rob, as you see"; the old lady opened her arms and displayed her ancient attire. "I am a scarecrow. And if a dead scarecrow is found one day on a mountain path—

well, I should prefer that, to tell the truth, to all the lugubrious paraphernalia of a death-bed."

"I agree with you! I would too," said Graham. Their dark eyes dwelt on each other for a moment. Something passed between them. He did not think he liked the old lady, but a smoldering ember of recklessness, ruthlessness, perhaps, looked out at him from her eyes and his own dark fires answered it. "Don't die in the mountain path till we meet again," he said.

It was comical, pitiful, he reflected, after she had left him, to remember how the Second Empire glance had answered this final sally: a glance arch, triumphant; lovely woman playing with her fan and rewarding gallantry with a smile that promised everything, or nothing. He had delighted her; enraptured her. Poor old creature. She was ravenously lonely.

Buissac lay along the banks of the great river, hardly more than a thin scattering of houses; the inn, with its cheerful garlanding of vines, at one end, a villa or two at the other. Half-way up the cliff a monstrous modern *mairie* with pompous wings and preposterous cupola half obliterated the Romanesque church, ancient, patient, tranquil, with dark carved porch, and a mushroom-like clustering of chapels—one roof overlapping the other—about its apse. Higher still, on the wooded summits, a ruined medieval castle was poised like a falcon against the sky.

In front of the Ecu d'Or, on the wall that ran above the river, a young woman dressed in mushroom-colored silk was lounging, a young woman with her hands in her pockets, a cigaret between her lips, an air of infinite if indolent good-humor, and Graham, as he saw her, felt her to be a further exemplification of happy living, for Jill's demand on life was certainly low in the sense that it was very simple. Yet the mystery of Jill was that anyone so rudimentary should seem to possess so much. Sitting there against her background of golden river and golden sky, unaware of appraisals, unconscious of esthetic significances, the splendid evening permeated her, and she was a part of it all in a sense that the passionate yet impersonal attitude of the artist could never sink to—or attain. It seemed to belong to her as much as she to it.

She sat, as he approached her, not moving, and keeping her oddly smiling eyes upon him. Jill's very eyebrows partook of her smile; they drooped from their broad, quizzical lift over the bridge of her nose and the corners of her eyes drooped with them, while the corners of her mouth curled up. This gaiety of demeanor had in it no touch of coquetry or challenge; it was, rather, that of a schoolboy, and of an English schoolboy, for Jill was as English as a hawthorn hedge in May.

Her sunburned skin was almost as dark in tone as her tawny hair; but by nature it was fresh and pale. She had been motoring all

day and her small, prominent nose was slightly blistered by the hot wind, and her small lips parched, so that she looked more than ever like a hardy boy. But it was so he liked best to see her.

He sat down on the wall beside her and felt, again, his old pleasure in her looks. It never failed him; just as her pleasure in his, he imagined, never failed her. It was with each other's looks that they had fallen in love five years ago, towards the end of the war, and he liked Jill's as well now as when he had first seen her, sitting above him, against a war-ravaged sky, in her ambulance lorry. Poor old Jill could hardly have foreseen that in the gallant, blood-stained young officer who had won her heart, almost without asking for it, she was to find nothing but a moody, incomprehensible artist. She was a girl to marry a soldier, not a girl to marry an

artist; whereas he was as content with Jill now as he had been then, and asked nothing more from her. Loyal, kind, unselfish, there was something endlessly dependable about her, something that made him think of her, in their relation, as riding a restive,



The morose old man showed no sign of the excitement that reigned behind the door.



C "We seldom see Madame la Comtesse here in Buissac," Monsieur Michon said to Jill and Graham. "She is an eccentric old lady."

cherished horse and saying: "Steady, old boy; steady." She had never had to say it explicitly; yet he knew that but for Jill's imperturbable confidence he would have fallen again into the disorders of his morose and rebellious youth.

"Any luck?" she asked him now, and it was characteristic of her to put his artistic activities in the category of sport. She would feel towards his canvas as towards a basket of trout.

"Yes. Good. This country surpasses everything. Where have you been?"

"Oh, for miles; over the mountains. There are table-lands up there with endless birch woods on them. And I found a great

blue lake. But nothing's better than this. Nothing could be better than that river."

From where they sat they gazed down the golden flood to where, beyond a beetling, wooded promontory, dark against the sunset, it turned in a vast curve and seemed to brood across the golden plains.

Opposite Buissac the shores were less steep and russet vineyards climbed from ledge to ledge of quiet hillside above another hamlet its evening cries faintly wafted.

At the turn of the river the promontory ran a long foot out into the stream, a long green peninsula, its poplars shimmering

against the sky. They could see that cattle grazed there, three cream-colored cows, half dissolved in light, moving among the poplar groves.

"It's all so gentle; yet it's almost dreadful, too," Jill murmured.

"Dreadful? How do you mean?"

"That great, dark cliff, hanging over everything like that; and everything being so vast; so much more than one can possibly need," Jill said vaguely. "Dreadful in a splendid way, of course. Terrible is a better word, perhaps."

"Everything beautiful is more than one needs, my funny Jill. That's a definition of beauty, perhaps. Except that it's what one needs more than anything."

"Yes. That's true," Jill nodded. And her young face had the strangeness that gravity lent to its jocund lines.

An old peasant woman passed, knitting, along the dusty high-road before them, leading a flock of gaunt, disconsolate sheep.

"The only trouble with the place is the animals," said Jill, following the sheep with her eyes. "They all look half starved."

"That old creature looks half starved herself," said Graham. "And by the way I'm going to take you to tea with another old woman and I shouldn't be surprised if she were half starved, too. I feel as if we ought to bring our bread and butter with us."

"How did you pick up anyone in these parts who has tea? There'll be boiled milk with it, I wager you."

"She's an old countess, and she lives just beyond that promontory, I gather, for I think I make out chestnut forests on it. She appeared while I was painting and only asked to stay and talk all day. Rather beautiful; rather direful. I never saw anything like her. I only got rid of her at last by telling her I'd come to tea and bring you with me. If you ask me, I think she fell in love with me at first sight. It was a *coup de foudre*."

"Poor old girl! I don't blame her. I did, too," laughed Jill, perhaps a trifle ruefully.

So they sat on till it was time to get ready for dinner, watched from the open windows of the Ecu d'Or by Monsieur and Madame Michon, by Camille, the *garçon*, and by Amélie, the maid of all work, who was, Jill remarked when she appeared once or twice at the door to wring out a torch or sweep a heap of dust into the road, as gaunt as any Buissac sheep.

They were a handsome pair and fulfilled the French tradition of the charming and eccentric English couple traveling unaccountably, light-heartedly, erratically through a country not



C. "Once a year the poor man climbs up to hear my confession. Such enormities as an ancient, caged old woman can commit."

I do
Some



I do not face him, I am such a sinner. And then I recite to him all my enormities; Sometimes I tell him sins that I have not committed to see what he will do."

their own. They had come in a small, open car, yet Madame last night at dinner had worn pearls and Monsieur had an impressive set of toilet articles. They would, everybody felt it, be generous with tips, and not critical of bills.

That night, when they sat, with coffee and cigarets, on the balcony that overlooked the river, Monsieur Michon ventured to ask them if they were pleased with Buissac, and they said that they were very pleased.

"Is it over there that the Comtesse de Lamouderie lives?" Graham asked, pointing towards the promontory.

"Madame la Comtesse? Mais oui, monsieur." Monsieur Michon could not conceal his surprise. "Monsieur knows Madame la Comtesse?"

"I met her this afternoon. She lives at the *manoir*, she told me, in chestnut woods."

"Yes, but it is a rough road. Monsieur will not get the car to go up it."

"So she said. One follows the highroad and turns off."

"You cannot miss it, monsieur. One turns off at the cemetery à *mi-route*. And one has fine views of the river on the way. We seldom see Madame la Comtesse here in Buissac. She is an eccentric old lady."

"And do you have great floods here at Buissac?" Graham asked, idly interested in verifying his old friend's histories.

"Ah, not now, monsieur. This is not the season." Monsieur Michon was evidently alarmed lest a reputation for floods should make Buissac less attractive.

"No; not now. But in the spring. Are people often drowned?"

"Drowned, monsieur?" Monsieur Michon spoke with repudiation. "No one has been drowned at Buissac—except a cow here and there. We have great floods, in the springtime, in some years; but we know how to deal with them and no life is in danger."

"No corpses, eh?" smiled Graham. "They don't go floating down the current?"

"Mais non; mais non." Monsieur Michon smiled indulgently now, perceiving his guest's humor. "We do not deal in corpses here."

"It's a day like a fairy-tale," said Jill.

"A happy fairy-tale or a sad one?" Graham asked.

They were on their way to the *manoir*, the green, lustrous glades of the chestnut forest opening before them as they climbed the gradual ascent that led up from the river level. It was a beautiful walk as Monsieur Michon had said and the cool, sunny afternoon lay like a benediction over the country.

"A (Continued on page 167)

By Ring W.
Lardner



The Jade Necklace

NO, I'M not with the Griffin people any more. I'm in the picture business—Colossal Films Incorporated. Class, hey? I don't know what you'd call my job; I'm a kind of a half secretary and half valet to Bauer, L. N. Bauer, you know, the big boss. The big fella—that's what they call him around the joint, either that or L. N.

I don't get much more dough than the Griffin people gave me, but honest to God, the things that happen up there would make a book if somebody wanted to write it. You take for instance what they've been pulling off just the last couple of months—well, you won't believe it, but I'm telling you it happened.

Of course you saw "Danny Darling," the show Dennis Byrne was in. Al Smith pretty near had to call out the militia to keep the flappers from smothering him every time he left the theater. Well, the Supreme people signed him up to a contract at \$7,000 a week, win, lose or draw, figuring he'd make any film sheik look like a cartoon. And when L. N. and Wolf, our vice-president, when they heard about it, they went around for a day or two with their faces so long that their chin tripped them up.

Finally Wolf said there was only one thing to do and that was go and grab some other beautiful Mick, get him all the publicity possible and beat the Supreme people to their first

Byrne release. The next question was who, and there didn't seem to be any answer. A few Irish juveniles were in different shows around town, but none that were liable to make the women forget Byrne. They'd have hired a policeman or a white wings if they could have found one pretty enough, but this Byrne is a tough baby to equal, let alone top.

Well, L. N. cabled to a friend of his in Dublin, a fella in show business there, and asked him to recommend who was the handsomest actor in Ireland and the fella cabled back that there was a young actor named Maurice Kavanaugh who was the handsomest actor in Ireland or anywhere else. L. N. cabled Kavanaugh, asking him what he'd take to come to America and do a picture and Kavanaugh named the modest little stipend of \$8,000 a week. I think he was afraid of the ocean. But what does L. N. do but cable him to come at that figure and he showed up at the office two weeks later, as sweet a looking young devil as ever vamped a colleen bawn.

Bauer and Wolf all but kissed him. Now they had Supreme at least tied if not beat. Just under six feet tall, built like Dempsey, black, wavy hair, blue eyes, perfect features and teeth so white that you had to wear smoked glasses when he smiled. Every time he walked in or out of the joint, all the stenographers swooned.

Illustrations by
C. D. Williams

The INSIDE of a Famous Motion Picture



Kavanaugh showed up, as sweet a looking devil as ever vamped a colleen bawn. Bauer and Wolf all but kissed him.

"We've showed them up again." That's what L. N. said. "Yes," says Wolf, "but we haven't got a story for him and for all we know, Harrison—that's the big guy at Supreme—for all we know, Harrison's all set with a story for Byrne and ready to shoot."

"I know different," says L. N. "I got it pretty straight that they've been hunting high and low for a story and haven't found anything that even comes close."

So Wolf said: "They're that much ahead of us, though. We've still got to look through a lot of junk that they've probably eliminated already."

"Don't you worry," says Bauer. "We won't waste time on stuff that's no good. I've got a couple of friends of mine—you know; fellas like Paul Wells and Quinn Martin—that whenever we've wanted a certain type of story to fit a certain star, they've always told me and told me right. Remember when we needed a vehicle for Kate Hollis and I called up Martin and he said 'Jane Eyre' without a minute's hesitation, and you know what a sensation it was. I'll get a hold of he or Wells right now and tell them who we've got and one of them is bound to come across."

But Martin and Wells were both on their vacation and couldn't be located. That same day, Harry Salsinger, that works on the paper, he happened to drift in the office and Bauer said to him, he said:

"Harry, do you know any good Irish stories?"

So Harry says: "Well, I don't know if you've heard this one or not, but one night Pat and Mike got lit and went up to a supper club—"

He didn't get any further with it. L. N. explained that he wasn't looking for a gag, but a real Irish romance that you could use as a vehicle for a fine-looking Paddy. Harry made a couple of suggestions—I forget what they were, and L. N. couldn't spell them so he didn't write them down.

The two big boys kept getting more and more nervous till they had us all jumping sideways and ready to quit; nothing

we did suited them. They're generally pretty good people to work for, but they were so scared Supreme was going to put Byrne over that they began ranting around like a couple of motorcycle cops.

Then one day L. N. was sitting at his desk spelling out the picture news in the morning paper and all of a sudden he gave a yell and told me to run and get Wolf. When Wolf came in, Bauer was so excited that his voice shook.

"Look here!" he says. "Read this! We've got to act quick!"

"What does it say?" says Wolf after reading it.

"I'll read it out to you," says L. N. "It says, 'Supreme Pictures is reported to have offered David Wallace twenty-five thousand dollars for the film rights to his novel 'Harridan.' This book is the best seller of the spring season and its author

has already been approached by Broadway theatrical managers who believe it could be successfully molded into play form. Which of Supreme's stars it is wanted for is, apparently, a secret.'"

"Well," said Wolf.

"Well!" Bauer hollers. "Is that all you got to say—'Well'? I tell you we ain't got any time to lose!"

"But explain what you mean," says Wolf. "Supreme Pictures is offering somebody twenty-five thousand dollars for some book and they're going to make it into a picture—what of it?"

"Didn't you hear the name of the book?" says Bauer. "'Harridan.' Who could they want it for but Byrne?"

"Oh, I get you," Wolf says.

"It's about time you got me," said Bauer, "and it's about time we got a hold of this Wallace and nailed him down."

"But listen," says Wolf, "why not buy the book first and read it and see if it's what we want?"

"There ain't time to read it now," said L. N. "While we're reading it, Supreme goes ahead and buys the rights and we're sunk. Besides, they've read it and they know it fits Byrne or they wouldn't have made the offer. And if it fits Byrne, it fits Kavanaugh. So we're suckers if we don't sew it up."

"I guess you're right," said Wolf. "There's no use taking chances."

So they spent that whole day trying to locate Wallace and raving because they couldn't, but the next morning they did and he showed up in the office and they asked him what he'd take for the rights to his book.

"That depends," he says. "I wouldn't want my story changed and I'd want to see the picture before it was released. And I'd like to know if my name would be used."

"You're a pretty famous author, ain't you?" says L. N., who hadn't ever heard of him. "We'd be glad to use your name."

"I'm not sure I want it used," said Wallace. "But if you used the title 'Harridan,' you'd pretty near have to use my name because everybody knows I wrote the book."

"We'll certainly use 'Harridan,'" said Wolf.

"And what girl would play in it?" Wallace asked them.

"That will have to be a secret for the present," says L. N.

Then they asked him again to name a price.

"I tell you I'm a little particular," he says. "I take pride in my work and I don't want to see it made ridiculous. Money isn't everything."

He was going on with his speech, but Bauer interrupted him.



"The lieutenant is lonesome and he happens to meet a beautiful Japanese girl. You ought to see

"Well, we'll give you fifty thousand dollars cash," he said. Wallace fainted and when he came to, his scruples were all gone.

L. N. and Wolf had put another one over on Supreme and they spent the rest of the morning holding hands and slapping each other on the back. L. N. sent me out to buy him a copy of "Harridan" and after he came back from lunch, he began to read it. But on the first page he crashed right into three great, big, long words, words like "beatific," "solecism" and "torture." And the book was over three hundred pages long. So he said he was going on a party that night and would I mind reading the book and giving him a synopsis of it the next day.

I don't know if you read the book or not. It was about a family that the mother was dead and her two daughters and one son had idolized her and a year after she died, the father had gone abroad and pretty soon he cabled back that he had married a Mrs. Garrett. They didn't know who she was, but some of their friends knew her by reputation; she was supposed to have been a kind of a loose woman and they said she was old besides and their father must have been drunk when he married her. They were sore anyway on account of him getting married again, so they were ready to treat her like dirt when he brought her home.

Well, she hadn't been a nun by any means, but she wasn't old and she was so pretty and so attractive and nice to them that they couldn't help liking her. The son fell in love with her, but she told him to behave himself and stick to the nice little flapper he was engaged to. That's about all there was to it.

So the next morning I told it to L. N. and after I got through, he looked kind of dumb. Then he asked me which part would suit Kavanaugh, the son or the father. I told him the father was a man fifty-five or sixty years old and the son's part was so small that you could give it to an extra.

"Well, then," he said, "who is 'Harridan'?"

"That's the second wife," I told him.

So he said he thought her name was Garrett.

"'Harridan' isn't a name," I told him. "It's just a word and in this book it's used kind of sarcastically."

Then he asked me what it meant.

"Well," I said, "it means two or three different things."

"Look it up and find out what it means," he says.

So there was a little dictionary there in the office and I looked it up and read it off to him: "Formerly a loose woman; now commonly a vixen." Or something like that.

"Well, what's a vixen?" he asked me.

So I looked that up—"A female fox (obsolete); a cross, ill-tempered person, now used only of women; a jade."

"Well," he said, "it's a cinch Kavanaugh couldn't play a female fox or a grouchy woman. I guess we'll have to write in a part for him."

So I said: "If I were you, I'd have 'Harridan' fixed up for some woman star and leave Kavanaugh out of it."

"That'd be a swell idea, wouldn't it?" he says. "Here is a story that Supreme was trying to get for Dennis Byrne and we beat them to it and buy it for Kavanaugh and you want us to leave him out of it!"

I told him I didn't believe Supreme had Byrne in mind when they made the offer for the book, if they ever did make an offer.

"You're crazy!" he said. "Those fellas at Supreme are just dumb enough to think 'Harridan' is an Irish name and you can bet they were wild when Wallace told them we'd beat them to it. And they'll be wilder yet when we spring a handsomer Irishman than they've got in the very story they were trying to land for Byrne."

A day or two later, L. N. announced that he and Kavanaugh were going out to Hollywood. He'd talk over the story with Driscoll, our star director, and Earl Benham, who he'd picked to write the scenario, and he thought that by seeing Kavanaugh and getting acquainted with him, they'd have a better idea what he wanted.

So that's the last I saw of him for a month. Day before yesterday he got home and the first thing he asked me was to



Maida Guthrie as a Japanese! She'll be a sensation!"

get a hold of Wallace again. So when Wallace came in, he says: "Wallace," he said, "I want to get your permission to not use your name in connection with that picture."

"But as I told you before, Mr. Bauer," said Wallace, "everybody knows I wrote 'Harridan' and if you call your picture 'Harridan,' people will naturally think of me."

"We're not going to call it 'Harridan,'" says L. N. "We're calling it 'The Jade Necklace.'"

Wallace and I were both goggle-eyed.

"We've changed your story a little," says L. N., "but we're basing it on your idea; that is, I got the idea for the picture we're making from the title of your story. One of the meanings of 'Harridan' is 'vixen' or 'jade.' Well, I couldn't figure out anything along the lines of a vixen, but jade was a set-up. Everybody knows what jade is. So I gave Driscoll and Benham a rough outline of what I had in mind and the picture's about half done already. The gang sails the day after tomorrow to shoot the balance of it—in Japan."

"Japan!" said Wallace.

"Yes," says L. N. "Of course a person naturally thinks of China when you think of jade, but somehow or other, Japan seems like a more romantic place and they'll be there just in time to get some beautiful shots of the cherry blossoms."

"I'd kind of like to hear the story," says Wallace.

"I'll give you an outline," says L. N., "but I'm going to ask you to keep it under your hat. The story starts with the Pacific fleet of our navy—they're going to cruise across the Pacific and look in at Japan and China and those places. Across the Pacific. Well, the story starts where they are leaving on this cruise. The hero is a lieutenant in the navy. Gifford Dean plays the part and you ought to see him in a naval uniform. Immense! The story starts where they are leaving on this cruise, across the Pacific, and they are saying good-by to their wives and sweethearts. The lieutenant—that's the part Gifford Dean plays—he's supposed to be married. Thelma Bowen plays the wife, the lieutenant's wife. They say good-by to

each other—she's crying and hates to see him go. He tells her he'll think of her every minute; that is, while he's gone.

"We see the fleet leave after all the farewells and everything, and then we shoot over to Japan and we see them landing there. The sailors are going to enjoy themselves. And the officers, too. The lieutenant—that's the hero, the part Gifford Dean plays—he is lonesome and he doesn't go and drink or cut up with the rest of the men; that is, officers. He's lonesome and he happens to meet a beautiful Japanese girl. And you ought to see Maida Guthrie as a Japanese! She'll be a sensation! Maida's playing the Japanese girl, the heroine in the picture, that falls in love with the lieutenant. That's Gifford Dean.

"Well, the love-affair goes on; that is, he's just homesick and misses his wife, but it's a serious thing with the girl, the Japanese girl. That's Maida Guthrie's part. Finally the lieutenant sees that he can't possess the girl unless he goes through with a Japanese marriage; naturally the marriage don't mean anything to him, especially as he is already married, but he goes through with it in order to possess the girl, though one of his brother officers tells him it ain't right. But he goes through with it.

"They pull off the Japanese wedding, with the girl's father and mother, both of them Japs, both there. And a girl friend of the girl, another Japanese. And the lieutenant's officer pal.

"Pretty soon the fleet sails away, back to America. The lieutenant promises he'll return to his Japanese 'wife.' Then we'll show she and her Japanese girl friend pining away for the lieutenant and after a while there's a baby born and we'll show the girl comforting herself with the baby and telling the baby that its daddy will come back some day.

"Then the fleet lands back in America, out on the Coast, and we show the lieutenant being welcomed home by his regular wife—Thelma Bowen. Then there's some home shots and then the fleet takes another cruise across the Pacific, only this time the lieutenant's wife goes along. And it winds up with the lieutenant's real wife—the American wife—she meets the Japanese girl that only thinks she's his wife, and when she finds out she ain't his real wife, she kills herself and the kid. Or maybe we'll end it a little happier."

"One question," says Wallace. "What do you call the lieutenant in the play? Do you call him Pinkerton?"

"No," said L. N., "but we've got a detective in it. That's the part Kavanaugh plays. It ain't much of a part—he just helps recover the jade necklace."

"What jade necklace?" says Wallace.

"I guess I didn't tell you about that," said L. N. "When the lieutenant went through with this mock marriage with the little Jap girl, he gave her a jade necklace that belonged to his real wife and that's how the real wife happened to run across the Japanese girl, was on account of looking for her lost necklace."

"Well," said Wallace, "it ought to be a sensation if the photography is as good as the story."

"Don't you worry about the photography!" says L. N. "We've got some marvelous shots of the fleet going away and coming back and those shots of Japan in cherry blossom time will be worth all the money we're spending to go over there and get them. But how about your name? Can we leave it out?"

"I don't mind," said Wallace. "But I do think you ought to keep the title 'Harridan.'"

"No," says L. N. "Both Wolf and myself think my title is better."

He told me, L. N. told me, afterwards that the picture is going to cost a half a million dollars, not counting the \$50,000 they gave Wallace for his book and his name. And I'm not sure his estimate includes the \$8,000 a week detective.

So I wouldn't go back to the Griffin people for any amount of dough. I'm going to stay in pictures. It's fascinating!



CProbably no single article published in any American magazine for years has involved such an expenditure of imagination, time and money as this particular study of our youth by Honoré Willsie Morrow. For more than three months Mrs. Morrow journeyed from one end of America to the other, talking with scores of young people and dozens of parents. She went straight into their hearts and minds. Mrs. Morrow—shown above with her three children—was chosen for this important task by *Cosmopolitan* because of her rare and sympathetic understanding and because she is an unusual combination of reporter, writer and editor.

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By Honoré Willsie Morrow

You and I Have Failed

*I, at any rate, Have Failed to Understand
the Young Folks of Today—and the
Chances are that You Have, if You are More Than 30*

FOR some time I'd been hearing tales of the wildness of the present generation of young people. I'd heard them accused of being promiscuous, of drinking, of using drugs, of having bad manners, of refusing to take responsibility. My own children are nearing adolescence. I wanted to *know*. I wanted, not old wives' tales, but direct evidence.

I found it.
I found that there exists today among young people an attitude toward life utterly different from that of my generation at the same age. This was startling. But back of this change in youth, I found something still more startling. I found an inadequacy among parents that horrified me; an inadequacy so complete and so inexcusable that it set me squarely and completely in sympathy with their children!

I did not reach this state of mind until I had been for some weeks on youth's trail; until I had talked with educators and parents by the dozen; until I had wandered from New Hampshire to Alabama and from Alabama to Illinois, hearing in wearying repetition the same tales of the evils of automobile night riding, of road-houses, of gin, of co-education, of fraternity houses. Geography had no effect on the character of the evidence. I heard in Mississippi the same testimony that was poured into my ears in Massachusetts.

I grew utterly weary of it. The very vehemence with which these adults reiterated their statements began to undermine their weight with me. Wasn't there something on the conscience of parents who spoke with such curious harshness of the vagaries of their offspring?

The young people I had seen, from Maine to Texas, I had thought immensely attractive although I had had only the most superficial contacts with them. They appeared to me to be better poised, better educated as far as book learning goes than my own generation had been at that age. It was hard to reconcile the tales I had heard with their general keenness and virility.

It was a boy of nineteen in Chicago who effected the reconciliation for me. I spent a week-end with the boy's family in Chicago. They are old friends, not rich but moderately well-to-do, people of culture and high standing in their community. Charley, their only child, had graduated from a good private school and was a freshman in a Middle-West university. He was at home for the week-end during my visit. Cocktails and light wines were served at dinner and the young man took his share. His father and mother said, when I commented on this, that all the boy's crowd drank and they thought it better for him to learn to drink at home, like a gentleman, than to sneak about it, like a rowdy.

After dinner, on Saturday night, the son went off to a dance. About four o'clock in the morning he roused the household by letting himself, very drunk, and a young neighbor girl, also very drunk, into the house. Singing, hiccupping, stumbling, he tried half to carry, half to lead the equally noisy young girl to his room.

His father and mother got their son to bed, took the girl home and then sat for hours discussing the event. They were terribly concerned.

The discussion led to their giving me a description of the social doings of the country club where the dance had been given, that would have put to shame a report of the orgies in Falstaff's Inn. Late that afternoon Charley came down to the tea-table. Only his mother and I were present. He came in defiantly, a tall, thin, fine-faced boy. Before his mother could greet him, he gave her warning.

"Now don't start jawing, mother, or I'll leave. Such a rumpus about nothing! You and dad make me sick with your Christly notions."

After a little while the mother left us and Charley and I fell to talking. We talked for two hours. I opened the conversation with a fairly heavy and direct shot.

"I was brought up," I said, "to believe in chastity. Why don't you believe in it?"

"Men never have believed in chastity," he retorted. "It's merely been the custom to lie and sneak about it. We fellows are making no bones of it now. And all you prudes are pretending to be shocked. Look at dad this morning, laying me out! As if I didn't know all about dad! He was born and brought up right in Chicago and there are still echoes of the hades he raised before he married and settled down."

"Then, for all your contempt, you are patterning yourself on your father?" I asked.

"Gosh, no!" he cried. "Why, I wouldn't be like dad for a hundred thousand dollars, if you want the raw truth! When I'm his age, I'm not going to show a pot-belly when I play golf. I'm not going to think a game of bridge and tipling cocktails and going to the office is life."

"You mean," I insisted, "that you'll pattern your ideas of chastity on your father's but nothing else?"

"I don't mean anything of the kind," he replied a little sullenly. "I'm not knocking dad. He's just the usual thing in fathers, I guess. And mother too. She's all right, as mothers go. I suppose, after you reach the forty mark, your arteries are so hard they won't feed enough blood to your brain to let you understand your kids."

"There I'm sure you are wrong," I protested. "At forty, Holmes said, one should know one's a fool and revise one's plan. I'm ready to revise, if you'll show me it's advisable. For instance, you believe in sex freedom for boys and girls, don't you?"

"Well"—a little defiantly—"yes, I do."

"Supposing one of your girl friends should have a baby of which you are the father, then what?"

"She wouldn't have it," he replied. "That's where birth control helps out. The girls of this generation have had fear of results removed. Hence, sex freedom."

"Any obstetrician will tell you that a girl who is crossing the line in her relation with boys can never do away with the risk of motherhood. So I ask you again, what would you do if, say a few months from now, you found yourself a father?"

"I'd do whatever the girl wanted me to," he replied. "That ought to be noble enough for you. But it would never happen. Funny how ignorant folks like you and mother are."

"Have you ever talked to a good doctor about that point or about any other matter of sex hygiene?" I asked.

He shook his head. "Didn't have to. Learned all there was to know from other kids at boarding-school. What I didn't get there, I'm getting right now in my fraternity house."

"Did your mother or father ever give you *real* sex instruction?" Again he shook his head.

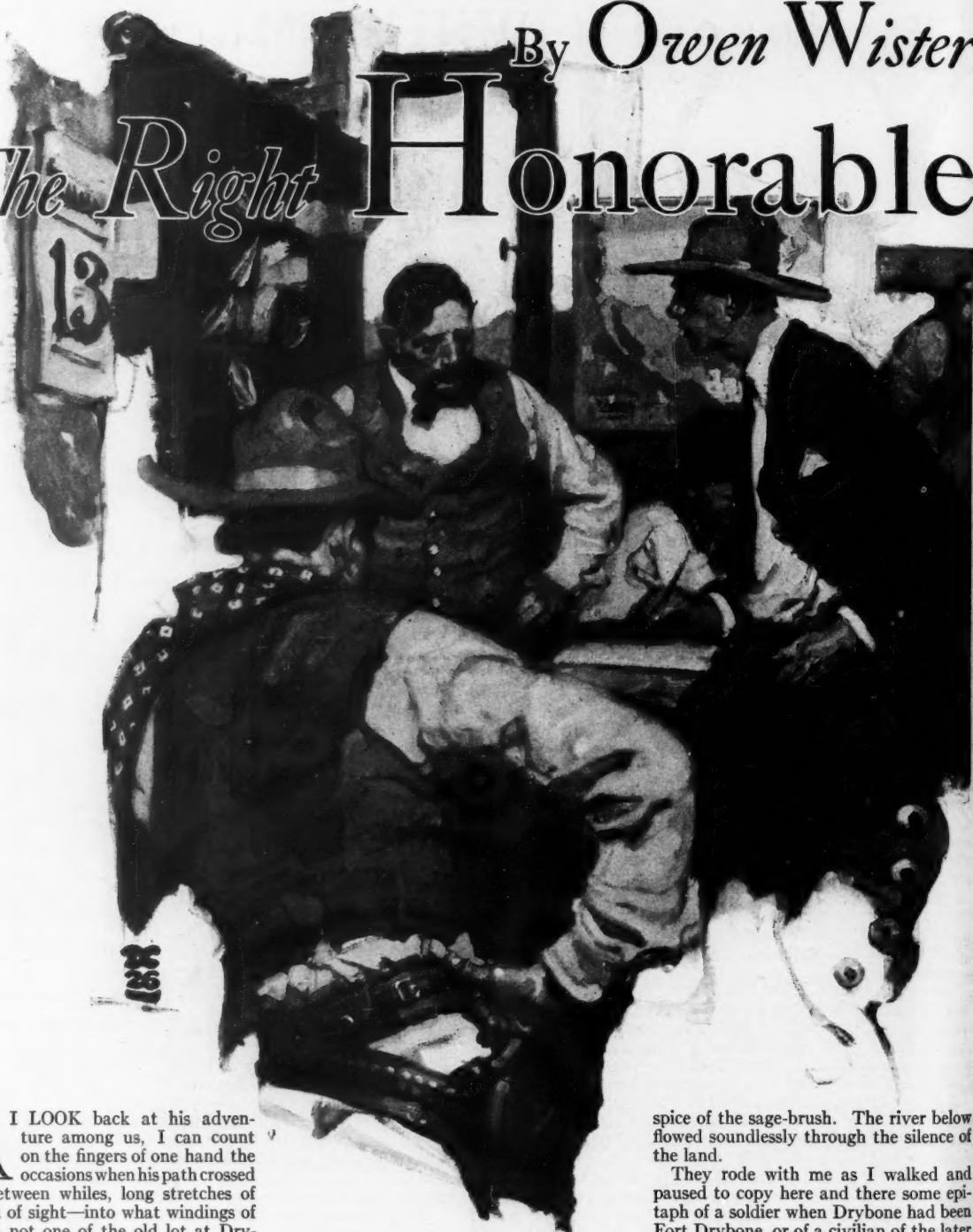
I said nothing for a few moments, for sheer stress of feeling. Have I and my generation and a hundred generations previous to Charley's been all wrong?

"When you marry," I finally went on, "will it make any difference to you whether or not your wife has been virtuous?"

He smiled. "Virtuous," he (Continued on page 209)

By Owen Wister

The Right Honorable



AS I LOOK back at his adventure among us, I can count on the fingers of one hand the occasions when his path crossed mine; between whiles, long stretches of it go out of sight—into what windings of darkness not one of the old lot at Drybone has ever known to a certainty. Some of those cow-punchers were with me that first morning when he appeared out of the void. I was new to the country, still a butt for their freaks, still credulous and amazed and curious; and that morning they were showing me the graveyard. Thirty years of frontier history could be read there at a glance, and no green leaf or flower or blade of grass grew in the place.

"May my tomb be near something cheerful!" I exclaimed.

"They don't mind," said Chalkeye.

"Their mothers would," said I.

"Not the kind of mothers most of 'em probably had."

I walked off among the hollows and mounds of sand, over the sage-brush shorn by the wind. On that lone hill were headboards upright, and rotted headboards fallen on their faces. Drybone, the living town, itself already half skeleton, lay off a little way, down on the river bank. The bright sun was heating the undulated miles, which melted in more undulations to the verge of sight, and the slow warm air was strong with the

spice of the sage-brush. The river below flowed soundlessly through the silence of the land.

They rode with me as I walked and paused to copy here and there some epitaph of a soldier when Drybone had been Fort Drybone, or of a civilian of the later

day when the fort had been abandoned. Killed, most of them; few women there; one quite recent, buried at the end of a dance, where she had swallowed laudanum—so they were telling me, when they stopped to look off, down the river.

Somebody on a horse.

"Give me your glasses," said Chalkeye.

Everybody took a turn through them, while the object approached.

Chalkeye passed my glasses back to me, remarking, "He'll make you look like an old-timer."

I took my turn, and knew what he was at once.

"He's English," I told them.

He now noticed us, and began to trot.

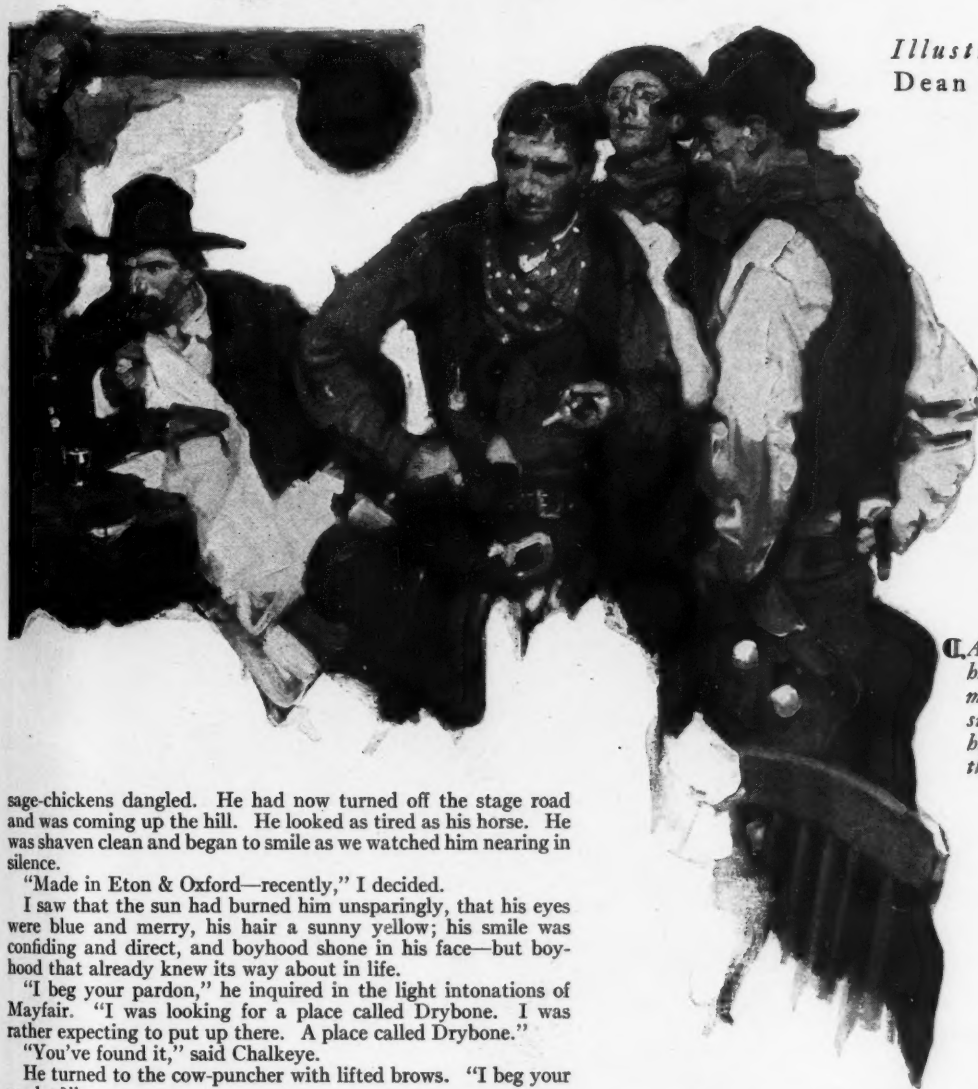
"Hold him on, somebody!" cried Chalkeye.

"No need," said I. "That's not the first horse he has ridden."

"He's bouncing like you done at first," said Post Hole Jack. They mentioned derisively his boots, his coat, his breeches, his hat. A shotgun gleamed across his saddle, from which some

author of "The Virginian"
the Strawberries

Illustrations by
 Dean Cornwell



*A hypnotized company
 hung on the English-
 man's words. He was
 surely too young to
 have something behind
 the scenes already.*

sage-chickens dangled. He had now turned off the stage road and was coming up the hill. He looked as tired as his horse. He was shaven clean and began to smile as we watched him nearing in silence.

"Made in Eton & Oxford—recently," I decided.

I saw that the sun had burned him unsparingly, that his eyes were blue and merry, his hair a sunny yellow; his smile was confiding and direct, and boyhood shone in his face—but boyhood that already knew its way about in life.

"I beg your pardon," he inquired in the light intonations of Mayfair. "I was looking for a place called Drybone. I was rather expecting to put up there. A place called Drybone."

"You've found it," said Chalkeye.

He turned to the cow-puncher with lifted brows. "I beg your pardon?"

"I said you'd found it," responded Chalkeye. "Drybone's right here."

"Oh, really? Oh, thanks!" He glanced at the graves inquiringly, and hesitated. "Oh. Really." He leaned to read the headboard I had been copying "Sacred to the memory of—but there's more of the place than this, I hope?"

"A little more," said Chalkeye.

"Because they told me I could put up there"—again he glanced at the graves—"and one isn't quite ready."

"Ready?" repeated Chalkeye.

"To meet one's Maker and all that."

At these words, all in the light intonation of Mayfair, a unified, fascinated silence settled on the cow-punchers, and out of this spoke one hoarse whisper:

"What'd he say?"

"Because," the Englishman resumed with his confiding smile, "they do tell one things here. And the things are frightfully absorbing, but they're not always wholly accurate. So one can absolutely put up here without recourse to Abraham's bosom?"

"There's a hotel," I said. "I'm at it. Not ten minutes off." At my voice he turned quickly. "Only ten minutes? How very jolly! I say, when did you arrive?"

The audience grinned; in spite of my sombrero and spurs and chaps, it was plain to him that I had arrived lately.

"This summer," I admitted with annoyance.

"But you're not English?"

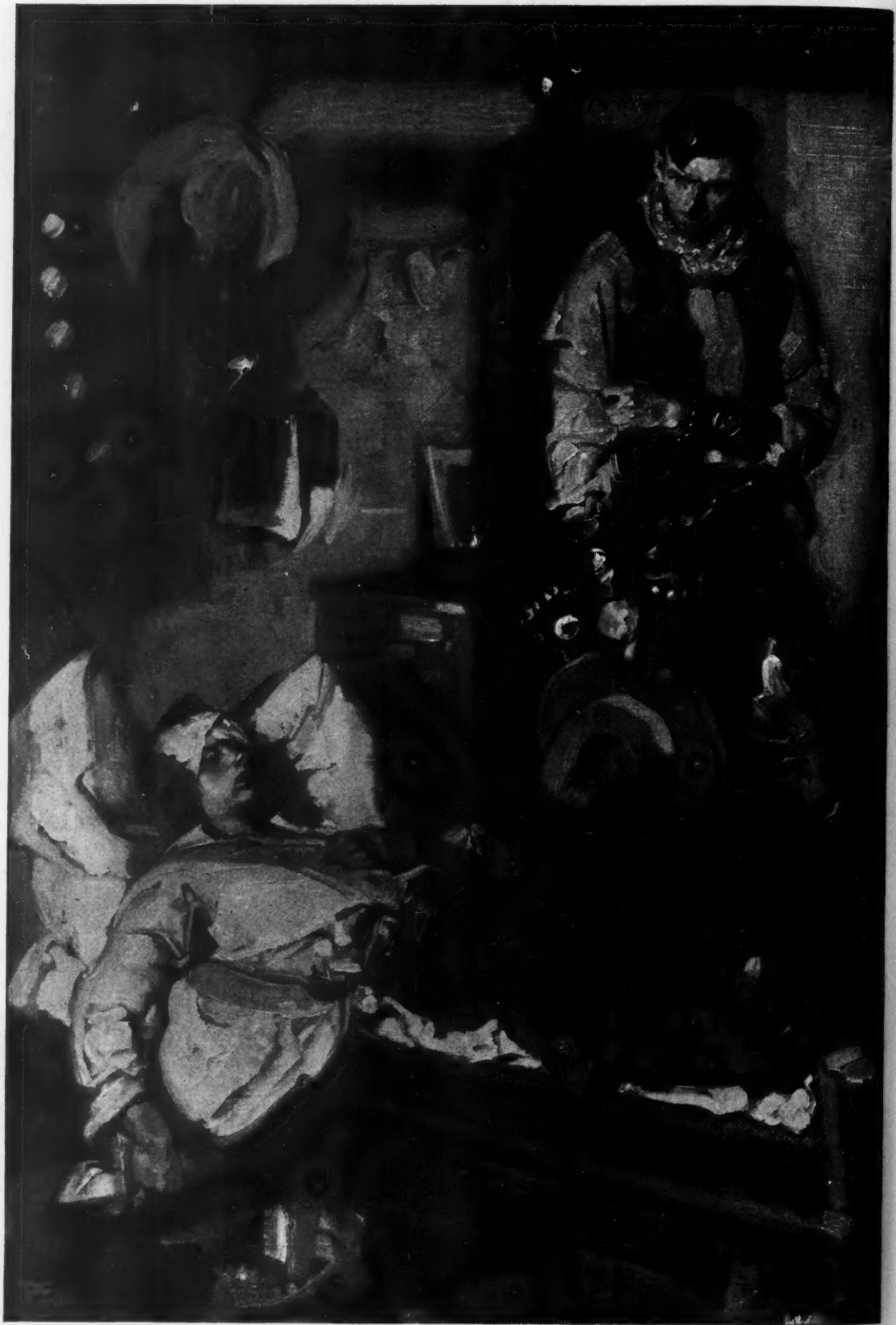
"I'm from Philadelphia."

"I saw the place. Liberty Bell. I say, I could do with a bath. Five mornings now—by Jove, it's six!—with tin basins that were no better than they should be. And every jolly old towel had been trailed in ignominy. And I'm starving for a dreamless sleep. What do you do about the bugs? Well, thanks so very much."

He took the road, but not alone; escorting him trotted a hypnotized company, hanging speechless on his words.

"These," he said to me, touching the sage-chickens. "They vaguely suggest grouse. Edible? Hallo, there go some more running along!"

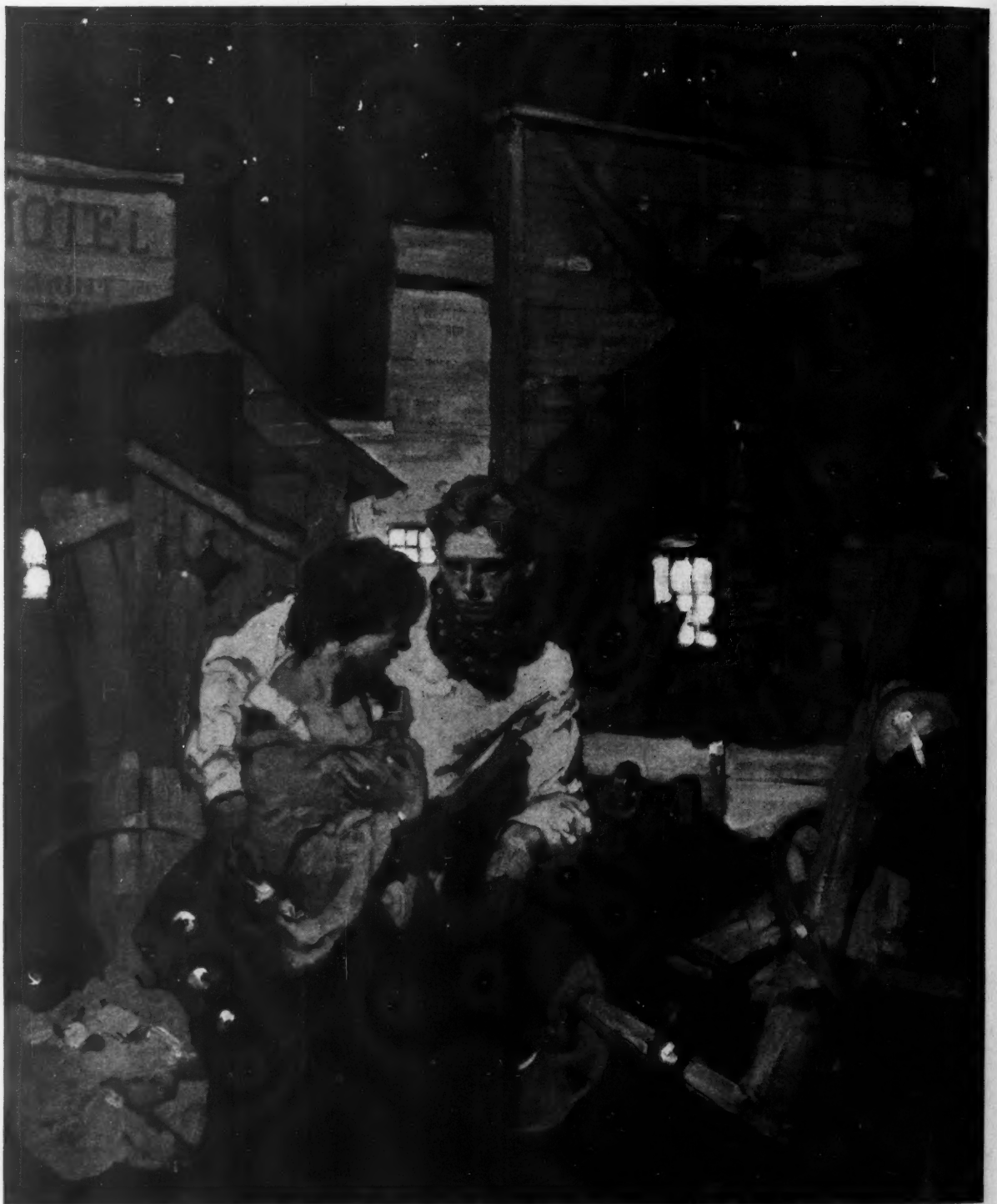
He was down, the reins flung over his horse's head, his gun ready.



CThe widow cried out that if the boy died she
said Chalkeye quietly. She meant no mischief.
Except that she sowed a few more seeds for



*would kill Jack Saunders, she would. "That'll be my job,"
but from her all Drybone learned of Chalkey's intention.
the future harvest, I don't think she did any harm.*



C "It's her that got widowed by the shooting. She consoles herself with Strawberries."

Two birds rose and fell right and left, and he raced gleefully to pick them up. The cow-punchers looked at each other and again fixed their eyes on him.

"I say!" he cried, swinging into the saddle, "what lots of game! Do you produce dogs? I must manage to have a dog. Are these birds edible?"

"Those young ones," said Chalkeye. "That old one would taste strong. Better draw them now."

"Draw? Now what's that?"

"I'll show you."

"Now is this going to be one of the things they tell you?"

Chalkeye laughed joyously.

"Lying is sweeter than sin to me," he declared, "but Tuesdays I swear off." He slit the birds open and cleaned them.

"Oh, I say!" exclaimed the Englishman. "You do a neat job."

"You'll do it next time," said Chalkeye, visibly flattered. "Your stirrups are too short, but you take your saddle-horn correct. Who learned you about dropping the reins?"

"That? Oh, the consequences of not. They had warned me, but I didn't think. And so there one was."

"Where was one?"

At this note of satire, the youth's eye gave a responsive flicker.

"Well, in point of fact, not anywhere at all. There's such

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a lot of your extraordinary country that's not anywhere at all. And so I walked, and walked, and the horse led one on and on, just out of reach, and the sun was setting, and I felt like such a silly ass. Finally some admirable people appeared above the horizon, and one was tremendously obliged to them. Of course one hasn't mastered your language yet." And the eye flickered again.

"Can you rope?" asked Chalkeye.

"Not yet. Ah, that's quite a game, isn't it!"

"I'll learn you."

"Will you really? Oh, thanks. You'll find I'm a dismal duffer at it. There's been so little chance. Only last week I was in the Pullman. That's a ghastly vehicle. A mere curtain between the world and one's true self. No country but a singularly chaste one—I'm told yours is exorbitantly chaste—would tolerate adjacent dishabille like that among the sexes. They told me Drybone would be a likely spot for seein' a bit of everything. I mean to say, of everything characteristic. I intend to believe faithfully all the things they tell me. It encourages them to tell more—and that is so very apt to be characteristic. Look how the sun has cooked my absurd countenance! I must absolutely procure a hat at once—a sensible hat like yours, I mean. Does Drybone contain hats?"

CHATTING along as it came into his head, he was unaware of the town till he was in it, noticed it suddenly, and stopped.

"I say!" And he stared eagerly.

"Is it characteristic enough for you?" I inquired.

He eyed the mangy parade-ground; he took in the silent barracks, the desertion, the desolation, the naked flagpole, the broken windows. New life had adopted many of the old shells. Outlaws of both sexes were snugly housed here to welcome customers. He listened while Chalkeye pointed out the principal objects of interest—the store, the hotel, the post- and stage-office, the several dens of the assorted industries. He listened, and his blue eyes shone like a child's at a fairy-tale.

"Simply rippin'," he murmured.

From the undulated miles that engirt us, a warm slow wind brought the fragrance of the sage-brush, wild and clean among the shells of Drybone.

He sniffed it. "Good smell, that! Bucks one up." For a moment more he contemplated the town, stark in the sunlight, and dumb in its noontide torpor. The twinkle waked again in his eye. "From your engaging statistics," he said to Chalkeye, "I gather that among the articles of household furniture here, one mustn't count on meeting the cradle in any abundance?"

The eye of the cow-puncher sparkled an instant in response; then he replied dispassionately: "They claim there used to be a few. But the population always kept even, because whenever a child was born, some man left town."

The Englishman stared in perplexity.

"Now what's that?" And he thought hard over it. "Oh!" he cried, "I take you. Yes. A sweeping denunciation of the local morals!"

On our way across to the hotel, he was sunk in meditation, but twice muttered to himself, "Simply imperishable." He dismounted absent-mindedly, absent-mindedly wrote his name in the greasy and inky hotel book, and absent-mindedly followed up the stairs the gambler who kept the establishment. From his room door he called down, "Remember, you're going to teach me how to rope."

"You bet I will!" Chalkeye called up to him. With that was sown the seed of their fateful relation.

The punchers' heads were bending over the hotel book, studying his name.

"Give me a whole day," said one, "and I couldn't learn it by heart."

"It's good for a job at the Hat Six," said the Doughgy.

"Why the Hat Six?" I inquired.

"Not a man there goes by his real name this summer."

Chalkeye ran his finger slowly beneath the new arrival's writing.

"Measure that," he ordered.

"Measure it?"

"Did you figure," demanded Chalkeye witheringly, "that any human—don't care if he is an English lord—would invent half a foot of name for daily use? It was his folks. They done that to him at baptism when he was too young to state his objections."

But the Doughgy stuck to his doubts. "If he's a lord, why does he quit his baronial castle?"

"Maybe its roof's leakin'," said Post Hole Jack.

"Maybe he's lost it at cards," suggested Hard Winter Hance. "Lords do that."

"And maybe he's just having a look at life like the rest of us," said Chalkeye contemptuously. "What are his reasons to me?"

"He's got 'em, all right," the Doughgy insisted. "You bet. Well, the Hat Six will go without letters till next mail day—I can't wait for that stage any longer." His spurs scraped jingling across the porch, he swung on his horse and was gone. They followed.

The sound of their galloping died away, their dust paled and vanished in the distance, and I loitered in the noon sun and the torpor, waiting dinner and aware of the pervading sage-brush. Who was right? I had never seen Chalkeye take to a stranger so quickly. The Doughgy could hardly know that the startling freedom of speech in Englishmen—freedom where the American is silent—freedom as to their incomes, their families, their gaieties—can go with a fathomless reticence, deep beyond our unversed technique. The American with something behind his scenes generally lets it show through his cracks; a consummate product like this blossom of aristocracy can seem wide open yet be tight shut.

Still, he was young, he must be very young; surely too young to have something behind the scenes already! But a beautiful, consummate product, a thousand years in the making.

"Say."

The voice came from the hotel porch; it was the landlord-gambler.

"Dinner?" I responded.

"Madden's looking after that, I guess."

His hotel was little to him, save to house and detain the traveler who passed—and stopped to play cards. Here often sat the big cattlemen until their thousands were gone, while lesser citizens dropped their hundreds, and the cow-puncher what his pocket still held after he had paid his visits to the women.

"Say," the landlord repeated. "That friend of yours ain't the love's young dream he looks."

Could the Doughgy be right? "Has he dealt you a hand already?" I laughed.

"No," said the landlord reflectively. "No, he didn't deal me any hand. At the rate he was goin' to bed, I guess he's asleep by now." Further meditation led to further remarks. "He mentioned he was expectin' his baggage by the stage. I said in that case I'd like a cash deposit. 'How much?' he said. 'Twenty-five dollars,' I said. 'Right oh!' was the words he used, and out comes his money. He's got plenty. He knewed it was a week's board and he asked for a receipt. Well, he got it off me, I was that amazed. There's no correspondence at all between his kiss-me-good-night-mother face and his adult actions."

"Hot water's what he wanted next, and clean sheets. He's between them sheets now. First time I ever done such a thing. Must have been his language. Kind of stunned me. 'Double or quits,' says he when I come back with the hot water and found him half naked already. You'd ought to see his fancy underwear. 'Ain't you eatin' dinner?' I said, and he says, 'I'll eat it the day after tomorrow. Don't let them break my dream-less sleep!' Who's your friend?"

"I've not made his acquaintance yet."

"H'm. D'you figure he's wanted where he's known?"

"More likely he's *not* wanted where he's known."

"H'm. D'you figure it's some other feller's wife?"

"They'd draw the line at her, not at him."

"Don't they draw the line for lords anywheres?"

"Oh, yes!"

WHILE the landlord was hearing my account of where they did draw the line, a shrill Mongolian voice cried from somewhere indoors:

"Dinnes ledly!"

It was Madden, sole servant of the hotel, cook, waiter, room sweeper, bed maker, who after the day's work lost his wages regularly and incurably at every game he tried in the den.

Still the landlord stood on his porch thinking. "Say. That kid's folks raised him wrong. If they'd exposed him to the weather some, he might have been a credit to them."

"You've not mentioned what came of double or quits," I remarked.

"Ain't I? Oh, well—I don't grudge it to him. He's got his twenty-five back, and twenty-five of mine, and my receipt for a week's board."

"God bless my soul!"

"Oh, it won't be let stay with him (Continued on page 181)

Why We Commit Suicide

As told by Dr. F. L. Hoffman, who knows more about the subject than anyone in the World, to

Norman Klein

MANY times the wish to kill myself has passed through my mind. There have even been times when I have actually brooded for some hours over the desire. But always some inherent common sense got me over the moment.

I know very few men and women who have not harbored the same tragic thoughts. It is almost universal—one of those strange, fascinating things of the mind that touch all people.

Why do we all suffer at moments from this morbid desire? And why, by the same token, do not more of us succumb to its mad pull?

I found out the other day from the one man who knows more about suicides than any other living man. For thirty-three years he has specialized in suicide data and he has an astounding mass of statistics and information about self-destruction. He is Doctor Frederick L. Hoffman, Consulting Statistician for a large insurance company, and below are some of the startling facts that he told me.

Sixteen thousand persons took their lives in 1925. That's as many as killed themselves from 1889 to 1898. Despite our exceptional prosperity today, with widely diffused wealth among the masses, the suicide rate in American cities is gradually assuming alarming proportions. Child suicides are increasing, too.

Suicides are unquestionably becoming more brutal in their utter disregard of all human instincts of love and affection. People kill loved ones, and then themselves. They jump from sky-scrappers, imperiling the lives of pedestrians.

There are 10,000 homicides annually. Add to this the suicides and the "accidents" reported by coroners' juries and that means 100,000 violent deaths each year.

The larger our real obligations towards others, the stronger the inhibition upon the suicidal impulse. The charitable woman who has "adopted" a tenement family doesn't commit suicide. It is significant that the captain of a transatlantic liner, the beloved star of a Broadway play, a hero of the sporting page do not take their lives as long as they have a responsibility to the public and achievement is theirs.

Suicide nearly always is an act of supreme cowardice, because it is to avoid the consequences of actions mostly wrongful or detrimental to self or others. Typical cases are those of the defaulting bank president, the schoolboy flunking in his studies, the grafting judge facing exposure, the bandit threatened with arrest and the gallows for slaying a policeman, the husband who fails to provide for his family, the sick person dreading tomorrow's visit to dentist's chair or operating-table.

Then, brides-to-be attempt death because of vague fears about marriage, and sometimes because they cannot steel themselves to confess indiscretions to their new husbands. Sometimes, too, as once in Philadelphia, a bride kills herself because her sister had a more elaborate trousseau five years before!

Men, fevered with the greed that we call love, think they hurt others by hurting themselves. A young man in Boston went to see his fiancée. Somebody had sent her flowers. Without a word, he picked up his hat, went home and shot himself in the mouth.

Suicide, you see, is civilization's footprint. Savages and barbaric tribes know it not. The negroes in the South, despite their tattered existence on plantations and in the mills, have a suicide rate of 1.9 per 100,000; while the white population, economically better off, has a suicide rate of 7.6. The world's "Suicide Belt" is the North Temperate Zone, where the climate is most favorable to human happiness. Always the more cultivated, prosperous, intellectual peoples have a higher suicide rate. Suicides are more frequent among women between the ages of fifteen and forty-five, and among men between twenty-five and sixty.

40

Yet there are fewer female self-slayers. Why? Because, for one thing, women frequently enjoy sheltered, untroubled lives, whereas men must strive against harsh reality. Chiefly, women can stand more suffering than men, as witness childbirth. Consequently they can endure more mental and physical distress without resorting to death's flight. Again, women are more religious; they find a spiritual consolation for their anguish.

Above all, theirs is the tribal instinct—the maternal instinct—and mother-love is stronger than the suicidal impulse.

Men prefer to hang, slash or shoot themselves. Women favor drowning, poison, gas and jumping from heights.

The tendency for self-destruction is greater among Protestants and least among Mohammedans and Jews, although suicides are increasing in the United States among those of the Jewish faith. The suicide rate of the Japanese is eight times that of the Portuguese. The rate is high at Christmas, when self-centered people imagine they're forlorn. Then, too, alcoholism is one of the most prominent of the causes of suicide, and a year-end spent in festive drinking often writes another "attempted suicide" on the police blotter.

There's an increase in suicides among country boys and girls who go adventuring after careers to the big cities. I find positive evidence of mental and physical deterioration among those who have come from the country to live in the cities and to whom the intensity of city life—its alluring opportunities for excitement and temptation—proves disastrous. This causes mental imbalance, nervous diseases; mental, material, moral and spiritual discontent. The next step only too often is attempted suicide.

IN THE last analysis, every suicide constitutes a form of mental breakdown and, by inference, a type of mental disease. In countless cases, people will exclaim, "Oh, I wish I were dead!" or, "For two cents I'd kill myself tonight!" Members of the family or friends take these threats lightly. That is wrong. Every indication of mental disorder should receive the earliest—and always sympathetic—consideration. There is the utmost urgency for dealing intelligently with what may require a totally new environment and for eliminating the causes of friction that tend to become intolerable.

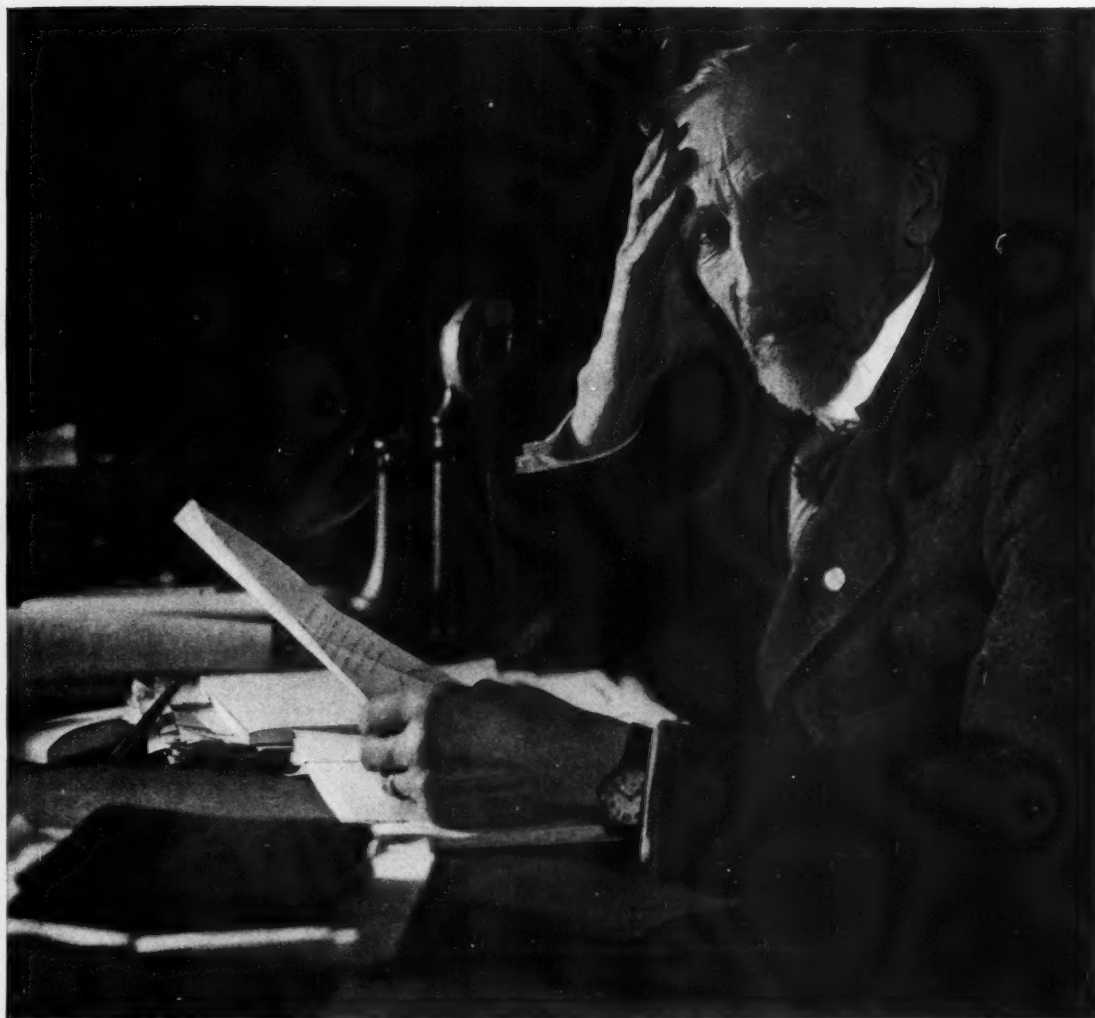
Diseases frequently are an indirect cause of suicide. This is unquestionably true of venereal affections, as well as cancer and other afflictions which impose dreadful sufferings. Suicide is also not uncommon among the tubercular.

Suicides are increasing among the rich and the college-educated because most people who are well-off don't know what to do with their money, and most people who are educated in the modern sense do not know how to apply their knowledge to proper or useful purposes.

It is too easy today to get poisons and pistols. Druggists sell poisons with indifference. Why are revolvers made? To kill! If suicides were made hard, fewer would kill themselves on the spur of the moment.

We are becoming too emotional, too inclined to regard weakness with sympathy. There is less willingness to submit to the hardships of life—a reluctance to endure physical suffering. Our forefathers did not know luxury. They hardened their muscles and their souls on a Spartan diet. Today we whimper if the water in the bathroom runs cold. If something goes wrong, or our feelings get hurt, we think we ought to protest by committing suicide. Yet the impetuous would-be suicide is always glad when death is frustrated by cynical and swift-working police surgeons.

Of course there's the other sort, the man who rages because he was pulled from the river. "You stopped me this time, but I'll try till I succeed," he says. That is the psychopath. He belongs in the asylum.



Doctor Frederick L. Hoffman, well-known health statistician.

Weather and geography have strange influences on suicides. Doctor Hoffman's latest figures show that San Diego's leadership in suicides—45.2 per 100,000—is closely followed by San Francisco, with 37.8; Los Angeles, with 32.8; and Oakland, with 29.9. Oddly enough, Seattle's rate is 28 per 100,000; while in Tacoma, Washington, it is 17.4. Nobody knows why a few miles make this difference.

These Pacific Coast cities, especially the California ones, contain a large proportion of human failures and breakdowns in the struggle for existence. They have reached the limit of their strength. They have no one to turn to. In these cities, particularly, organizations should offer a helping hand to those who are on the border-line between sanity and insanity.

Charm of surroundings hasn't much to do with it, I suppose. Washington, D. C., is more beautiful, of course, than Bayonne, New Jersey, an industrial city. Yet Bayonne's citizens must be happier, for their suicide rate is only 4.6 per 100,000, as compared with the 17.3 of the Capital. New Orleans has more allure than Holyoke, Massachusetts. Still, Holyoke's suicide rate—6.5 per 100,000—is half that of the Gulf city's—13.9.

Here's another surprising thing: We imagine the natives of Italy, Portugal and Spain to be fiery souls, given to operatic foolishness with daggers and lethal potions. That may be true when it comes to getting rid of local foemen and wives—but not themselves. The suicide rates in these countries, as in South Africa and South America, are low.

You must go northward in Europe to find the great numbers of self-inflicted deaths. Berlin's latest report that Doctor Hoffman has shows a rate of 50.2, three times that of Chicago with 15.3. Paris—19.5—is twice as deadly as Hartford, Connecticut—9.6. Leipzig—25.4—is three times as suicidal as New Bedford—8.3. The Teutonic countries are leaders abroad in

suicides. England and Wales had in 1923 a rate of 10.3, as compared with the 15.3 of the United States in 1924. And then there's Newfoundland, surely a lonely enough landscape, with 1.5 per 100,000, the lowest suicide rate of all.

In the final analysis suicide certainly is a most obvious evidence of failure on the part of the individual to adjust himself successfully to his environment. However hard the struggle for existence, we are here to survive it and, to a large extent, to make ourselves the masters of our fate.

The person who is interested in others is less likely to commit suicide. The present-day tendency is towards an exaggerated interest in self. We must be directly and seriously concerned with the welfare of others to be truly happy, and to realize that our life is serving a useful purpose.

They are selfish—these would-be suicides. That is the secret of suicide—egotism. Me—I—mine—I—I. Thinking only of self, of one's dignity, one's injured pride. Ballooning up petty troubles. A weakling's spirit. Coddling and pampering one's self.

Nearly all of us have contemplated suicide because it beckons as an escape from reality. I think it is some urge of the subconscious, whispering, "Die, and you return to tranquil, happy days—to your innocent childhood. No more worries, no more heart-break."

Then why do most of us refrain from suicide? Simply because those who survive the struggle for existence are of a better moral fiber—better trained in intelligence—have a higher sense of social and religious obligations—than those who fail.

The weaklings, the misfit, the selfish give in. They take their lives. The rest of humanity finds happiness in taking an interest in those about them, and perhaps paraphrases the doughboy's comment on the war by saying: "This may be a hell of a world, but it's the best one we've got."

Madeleine of Creille

The BEST of all
the Stories of Tombarel,
who would Commit MURDER
Cheerfully for a Woman

"MY DEAR Fontenay," said Tombarel, outstretching apologetic arms, "you know that my cellar and my house and everything that I have is at your disposal; but I will not sell you wine that is not worth drinking."

I had journeyed to the little mountain town of Creille two or three years after I had first made Tombarel's acquaintance, on my original errand, to buy a stock of his little golden wine; and this was how I was met. Last year's vintage, as everybody knew, was a failure; this year's was good, but it must remain some time in cask; the last of the two-year-old wine he had sold at great profit.

"Why didn't you tell me? I would have saved for you all that you wanted!"

Never was there such a misfortune. He slung his great Provençal hat on the table underneath the straggling cedar, thrust his fingers through his white mane of hair, and tugged at his pointed beard. Moved by these signs of extreme agitation in my excellent friend, I bade him be of good cheer. My cellar having run dry through my own slackness, I must pay the penalty of drinking alien and inferior wine for the next few months.

"That you shall not do," said Tombarel. "My neighbor, Capenas, has some of that vintage left. It is not as good as mine—a question of the sun—it isn't everybody that can have a *côte rôtie* in the mountains when there is so much shade at the critical period of the year. But it is good enough. He is keeping it for the *Hôtel des Étrangers*, and hoping for a good price, but I'll make him understand reason."

I said that the price was a matter of no particular concern—for these little wines are pathetically inexpensive—and I would not for the world try to beat down the excellent Père Capenas.

Tombarel laid a hand on my shoulder. "My dear friend, I know all these people like my pocket, and I am the Mayor of Creille, and it is my business to see that justice is done everywhere. *Fiat justitia!*"

He raised a hand to heaven in a noble attitude. I knew him so intimately that to have doubted his sincerity would have been an insult. "Come," said Tombarel; "we shall arrange that in two minutes."

He shouted for Angélique, his slatternly servant—an inspired cook, by the way—who brought him his ample cloak with metal cockle-shell clasps at the neck, and, having thrown it over him and clapped on his enormous black felt hat, he bade me follow.

We transacted our business with Père Capenas satisfactorily. He was a fat, weather-beaten peasant in the middle seventies; with what looked like a week's stubble of growth of thin gray

hair on bald head and fat cheeks and chin; myriad-lined; shrewd-eyed, shrewd-tongued, voluble in the *patois* of the mountains, but constrained in his French when he spoke to me. He wore a coarse, collarless shirt and a pair of canvas trousers, and bare feet stuck into shapeless *espadrilles*, or rope-soled shoes, and his courtesy was as perfect as that of Alcide Tombarel himself.

His daughter-in-law, Madame Capenas, a thin, battered woman of fifty, brought the conventional tray of little squat tumblers, for the tasting of the wine.

"And now," said Tombarel, after the bargain was settled, "how is the good Louis?"

The woman pointed to a little lean man sitting on a rude bench in the sun, in front of the long ramshackle house from which the pink-colored plaster was peeling in great patches, and talked long to Tombarel in the mountain dialect. Now and then Tombarel gave me a rapid translation, from which I gathered that Louis Capenas had been shot through one lung in the first year of the war, and had been, ever since, a hopeless invalid. He did what he could, poor fellow, but there were days . . . Ah! *mon Dieu!* . . . Apparently this was one of the days . . .



By W. J.
LOCKE



Illustrations

by

John La Gatta

The Capenas family were crushing the newly picked grapes, and Madeleine was ravishingly lovely as a bacchante, with hands and arms stained wine-red.

Led by Tombarel, we passed from the broken-down shed where Père Capenas stored his great hogsheads of wine, through a patch of olives, and arrived at the front of the *mas*, which is the Provençal name for a small farm dwelling. Tombarel shook hands with the sick man, introduced me as a painter, a lover of France, and his dearest friend. I sat down beside him, and found him a pleasant though melancholy companion. He spoke the rich French of Marseilles. As I, too, had been touched in the lung by a German bullet, the original cause of my settlement in this land of sunshine, we had common ground of talk. He was immensely proud of the fact that he had been promoted to the rank of sub-lieutenant just before being knocked out, and therefore was eligible to receive the red ribbon of the *Légion d'Honneur* which decorated his dirty old coat.

"But, although it helps morally, monsieur, pride doesn't keep a man alive. If it weren't for my wife and my father and my daughter—especially my daughter . . . *Ah! la voilà—Madeleine!*"

At that moment there stepped out of the door of the *mas* perhaps the most beautiful young woman I have ever beheld,

holding in both hands a tin vessel which probably contained house refuse. On seeing us she put the pan down at a convenient corner and advanced to meet Tombarel—evidently her friend. I repeat that she was amazingly beautiful: swarthy, wide-browed, dark-eyed, calmly kind like an Andrea del Sarto Madonna. She was attired in a soiled, villainous rag of a semi-fashionable dress, such as one could buy at any cheap emporium in France. It didn't fit, but she wore it with a curious air of distinction, and it could not hide the superb and slender lines of her body. Her legs were bare, her feet thrust into *espadrilles*. Her hair, strange phenomenon in a peasant girl of these remote mountains, was neatly cropped.

"Monsieur," said the invalid by way of introduction, "is a friend of Monsieur Tombarel, and has come to buy wine."

I rose, lifted my hat, took the delicate soft hand that she offered. "*Enchanté, mademoiselle*" . . .

"You were talking to my father about the war. I heard you. It is he who must be enchanted."

She spoke in the voice of an angel, a Parisian angel, soft and low and alluring, without any kind of provincial accent. So

might have spoken any lady in any drawing-room.

Tombarel, on the sight of her, left the stocky ancient, her grandfather, and her wrinkled, coarse-attired mother, and swept her in greeting the most courtly of bows. His hat was even bigger than that of a courtier of Charles II.

"*Ma petite Madeleine,*" said he. "I didn't know that you were in Creille."

"I arrived two days ago, Monsieur Tombarel."

"*Et ça va toujours bien?*"

"Perfectly," she laughed. "Madame is kindness itself. Whenever she can spare me, she lets me come home to my dear ones." She passed a caressing hand over her father's hair. "It's my only happiness."

Louis Capenas, in the most natural way, gave me the solution of a possible little mystery. Madeleine was lady's maid to a charming woman, a Madame de Saules, one of the old *noblesse* . . . Tombarel, like a courtly old Frenchman, never insensible to female beauty, took the damsel aside, and her father discoursed modestly for a few moments on her filial merits.

Then came a young man on the scene, an ordinary young man, attired not as a peasant, but sloppily townwise. I recognized him as Ferdinand Guiol, the son and heir of the proprietor of the one important shop of the tiny town—*Aux Arcades de Creille*.

You see, ever since I had suggested to the Mayor, my friend Tombarel, the setting of the town war memorial on the point of land jutting out over the mountain gorge, I had been made free, as it were, of the unsophisticated place. All the Municipal Council were my good friends. I inquired after the health of their wives and families. Now and then, if caught on the way by one of them, I was offered a glass at the *Café Pogomas*, where mine host would often join us. A painter by trade, I made many sketches in Creille.

Thus it was that I recognized young Ferdinand Guiol, who, in the most obvious way in the world, had come a-courting the attractive daughter of Louis Capenas. She turned from Tombarel and greeted him with a smile, and an ironical twist of her lips. He was peculiarly polite to the invalid, to Madame Capenas and the sturdy old grandsire. Then, after the eternal fashion of love-stricken and embarrassed youth, he mopped his forehead, although it was an afternoon in early November.

Tombarel and I took our leave and strolled up the ragged mountain path towards his own domain, which, according to the custom of the country was a *domaine*, literally so-called.

"Another romance in Creille," said I.

Tombarel shrugged his shoulders as one in dubiety. "She is pretty enough to damn the whole calendar of saints."



It was a Madeleine such as Ferdinand had never dreamed of in his wildest

I laughed in agreement. "I'd give anything to paint her." "Prudence, *jeune homme*," counseled Tombarel.

I laughed again. "If," said I, "I had fallen in love with all the pretty women I've painted during the last thirty years, I should be now in a lunatic asylum."

Well, as far as I was concerned, I thought, that was the end of the matter. But it wasn't. Chance dragged me into a drama which, in my own roundabout way, I want to describe.

At the time, however, I did nothing but carry away a memory picture of a queer scene. The front of a dilapidated, long-lying little *mas*, untidily furnished forth with barrels for wine and water, rakes, planks, broken stools, gnarled olive-trees, a tethered goat or so, a few fowls, and a nondescript dog on the dusty ground, hunting for fleas. A group of humans; Tombarel, majestic reproduction of the poet Mistral, the thin, dark consumptive hunched up on his wooden bench, the weather-beaten elderly woman in her print gown, the squat, ancient peasant in his collarless shirt and canvas trousers, the very ordinary young man in imitation urban raiment, and the Andrea del Sarto girl with her absurdly shingled head, and her short, skimpy, soiled dress, and with her assured air of amused tolerance.

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dreams. She said stonily to her companion, "Alfred, what does this gentleman want?"

Naturally, it was the girl in whom my main interest had been centered. Yet she was hardly a girl in the sense of rosebud fragrance. She was a woman of about six and twenty, in the fulness of her beauty. To her family she spoke the mountain patois, to Tombarel, the French of civilization . . . I pondered over the assimilative faculty of woman. The lady's maid had based herself on the lady, her mistress, and had obviously found and applied the secret of the great lady's charm.

Well, as it does not behoove a respectable English widower of fifty to think of French lady's maids, no matter how beautiful, or no matter how they may appeal to his painter's pure desires, I put her and the Capenas family out of my head for a long time.

IT WAS early afternoon in late April. I was sitting on the terrace of the Savoy Hotel at Nice, with disregarded drink by my side, the price of my comfortable seat, idly watching the sparse passers-by on the Promenade des Anglais, and the vivid blue sea of the Bay of Angels. It was half past two. The town was in a state of postprandial lethargy and seclusion. I had driven over in the morning to lunch with an American, whose portrait I was painting. An unexpected early engagement had summoned my

host forth at two-fifteen, and here was I, stranded until four o'clock when I had an appointment with my oculist. I was bored, wondering how I should fill in the time. It's a difficult matter for a man to provide himself with reasonable occupation for an hour and a half at a peculiarly unsocial hour of the day in a town to which he doesn't belong.

I was cursing American sitters who began business too early, and French oculists who began consultations too late, when the sight of a little yellow car surmounted by a vast hat and a white beard advancing eastwards, caused me to leap from my chair. I was just in time to outspread my arms and attract the attention of Tombarel. He signed readiness to pause, parked his little old-fashioned five-horsepower car on the opposite side of the way, crossed the road and sank into a chair by my side. He cast his hat on another chair.

"Ouf! Mon Dieu!" said he, and all sorts of other things not peculiarly coherent.

"What's the matter, cher ami?" I asked.

"The matter? The matter is that I am exhausted. I have been traveling backwards and forwards to Paris in crowded trains. I have just arrived. Ah! this P. L. M.—I can see the Directors sitting up all night, like torturers under the Inquisition, devising means to add a new torment for travelers. I know not what dire offense our poor France has committed

in the eyes of the *bon Dieu* but He has punished us by decreeing the Paris-Lyon-Méditerranée Railway. It is the worst railway in the world. There is a better railway from Teheran to Khar-toum."

Naturally I agreed with him. What dweller on the Côte d'Azur wouldn't? But it was on the tip of my tongue to ask what was wrong with the Blue Train, which had arrived at Nice two or three hours before. Then I reflected that, to French gentlemen of moderate means, Blue Trains were media of travel as remote from their ways of life as steam-yachts. Tombarel had probably passed the night in a corner of a first-class carriage with five other fellow passengers.

"Have you had lunch?" I asked.

Yes, he had eaten at Toulon. *En deux pas et trois mouvements*. But he was thirsty. He ordered from the waiter a vermuth-cassis—to my mind, as I care not for black currant sirup, a filthy and non-restorative beverage.

"It was on account of that young Guiol—Ferdinand—you know him? that I went to Paris."

He deplored the responsibilities of a man whom circumstance had forced to combine mayoral with (Continued on page 215)

By Alexander

The Story of



Loew's
new Avenue
Theater, built
on the spot where
Marcus Loew was born.

THE whilom Napoleon of the Penny Arcades rules now over more theaters than anyone in this or any other land. He has over two hundred in this country, he has his hooks into a good many more abroad, and others are building here and in London. The other day he tried valiantly to enumerate them. He explained the hitch.

"You see," he said, "there's a good deal going on that I don't pretend to keep track of. Only last week, for instance, I told someone in a pinocle game that we were putting up nine new theaters and when I got back to the office and checked up to see if we really were, I found that, as a matter of fact, we were putting up twelve. Yes, sir, we're putting up twelve new theaters right now and—"

But his secretary was coughing pointedly. He rolled an inquiring eye over the rim of his spectacles.

"It's fourteen now, Mr. Loew."

Some of this Loew chain are among the outstanding picture houses of the country—in chief, of course, a particularly large and juicy apple which fell into his lap after someone else had grown it. That is the Capitol in New York of which the celebrated organ and superb symphony orchestra are known to those who listen in everywhere from lumber camps in the Canadian woods to fish-smacks along the Chesapeake. When its thousands have sifted into the twilight of the huge auditorium and at last the crashing climax of the overture is picked up and seconded by an exultant blare of light throughout the house, you see as telling a contrast as your fancy could conceive to the shabby little up-stairs enclosure over that Cincinnati arcade which, in the beginning, summed up Marcus Loew's notions of a moving-picture palace.

For some time his sense of the possibilities of the new entertainment did not carry him beyond the fly-by-night store shows which led a gypsy life in the stray chinks of vacancy along the side streets of New York. But at last he aspired to the ownership of a regular theater, with a lobby and box-office and

stage and everything. That first Loew theater was in Brooklyn.

If you start tracing the threads in the pattern of Marcus Loew's existence, they do keep leading you back to the acquaintances formed in the old Weber & Fields Music Hall—that jolly playhouse which glowed so invitingly on the edge of Broadway in the New York that used to be. Just as it was a neighborly visit long ago to David Warfield's dressing-room in that music hall which eventually changed Loew from a modest dealer in furs to the mild but extensive octopus we have with us tonight, so it was another chance call on Lew Fields when that engaging and expert comedian was on tour which lured Loew into the nervous acquisition of his first theater.

It was something less than twenty years ago and Fields was playing at the head of his own troupe in some such midland city as St. Louis. Loew had gone there to examine an ailing penny arcade or to diagnose the anemia of some sickly nickelodeon. And with that sudden passion for one another's society which possesses all Broadwayites in exile, he soon drifted into Fields' dressing-room with the notion, I suppose, that that familiar face would ease his nostalgia by reminding him of Grant's Tomb or perhaps the Flatiron Building, to which structure, as a matter of fact, Lew Fields does bear a haunting resemblance.

At the moment that face was contorted with perplexity. For here was a letter from Times Square assuring the strolling player that there was a prime chance to buy a theater in New York dirt cheap. To be sure, the proffered bargain was at the wrong (or Brooklyn) end of the Brooklyn Bridge and it was to be had for little money only because no one would take it as a gift. It had previously rejoiced in the name of Watson's Cosy Corner, that theater, and it had housed until recently a gaudy and sinful burlesque show which eventually so offended the dwellers in the City of Churches that the police had been goaded into raiding it.

I suppose that, compared with a Broadway revue in this year of grace, the show at Watson's Cosy Corner would have seemed about as rakish and shocking as a Christmas cantata at Miss Minchin's Select Seminary for Young Ladies. But all this befell in the dark days before the new freedom and therefore Watson's Cosy Corner, suffering from the recent exercise of the Brooklyn police power, had stood dark, empty, accursed and unprofitable for many months. Wherefore, Lew Fields was advised that he could have it if he wanted it. As it happens, he didn't particularly, so he passed the letter on to very much.

Marcus Loew who, in his secret heart, wanted it very much.

Having exhausted the excitements of dealing successively in fur capes, slot-machines and nickelodeons, Loew went back to New York burning with a conviction that he must own that plague-struck theater in Brooklyn. For several years now he had been renting idle stores along the side streets of New York, installing movie machines therein, luring in the passer-by by means of flaming lithographs—which usually, as the passer-by



David Bernstein, who is the Metro-Goldwyn Distributing Corporation's treasurer.

Woollcott

Marcus Loew

discovered *after* his nickel had become the irrevocable property of Marcus Loew, bore no conceivable relation to the entertainment afforded within—and even sprinkling these meager programs with black-face songs and recitations. So by this time Loew had all the standard equipment of a theatrical magnate except for the disconcerting circumstance that he had no theater. The opportune depreciation of this playhouse at the corner of Pearl and Willoughby Streets in Brooklyn seemed to him like a beckoning fate.

All his cronies whom he anxiously consulted were at some pains to point out to him with varying shades of sarcasm that the mere opportunity to seat two thousand patrons instead of two hundred could scarcely be regarded as a boon if—as they seemed darkly inclined to believe—no patrons were likely to evidence any desire to be seated at all. Indeed, in order to keep from being too discouraged by these depressing counsels, Loew had to sneak across the bridge and seal the bargain with almost conspiratorial stealth.

Once in possession, the new proprietor of Watson's Cosy Corner was first occupied with the necessity of effacing the bad name which that theater had acquired by the misdeeds of its previous occupants. All showmen attach an immense importance to such an aroma. They even feel that an air of failure can be smelled in the hangings and upholstery of any playhouse where many plays have come to grief, and that an earnest of success remains behind, like something forgotten and left in a dressing-room, whenever a "Rain" or a "Lightnin'" finally moves on its way. After its troubles with the police, the new Loew theater thus smelled to heaven and its impresario's first task would be akin to fumigation.

So Loew arranged to turn the place over for a season to an Italian tragedian because the fellow was addicted to the works of William Shakespeare. This, of course, was neither the first nor the last time in his history that the Bard was subjected to the indignity of being regarded and employed as a disinfectant. At the end of this brief dalliance with the classics Marcus Loew was \$3,000 out of pocket.

It would probably have cost him that much to have had the interior of the auditorium repainted. Certainly he regarded the investment as not dissimilar.

Ever since then the orders throughout the Loew houses all over the world have been sternly on the side of the proprieties. This was but carrying out the policy which had made his Penny Arcades prosper, a policy predicated on the simple and severely arithmetical truth that there are more women and children in any community than there are Peeping Toms.

With the scrubbing season over, Loew took charge of the premises with the notion of inaugurating what afterwards became known as small-time vaudeville. At the same time he arrived at a momentous decision. Hitherto, at his scattered store shows in Manhattan and the Bronx, the admission had always been a nickel, to which level of prices he had leaped blindly from the Penny Arcade. But this was to be something better and, holding his breath, Loew



Inside the gorgeous Loew's State Theater. In this building are located the executive offices of Loew, Inc.

fixed the admission at an entire dime. The first day's paid attendance can be figured out by almost anyone, even without the aid of paper and pencil.

For the first day's receipts amounted to just ten cents.

The new management had not appreciated that there was a difference in something more than size between this theater and the little nickelodeons on the other side of the East River. Those had been opened and put to work by the simple process of sticking a bright lithograph in the window to catch any idle eye and then stationing a man at the door to pounce fiercely on stowaways. They had been addressed to the passer-by and the horrid thought of advertising had never entered the Loew consciousness. But theatergoing is not impromptu in America and a cloudburst that first afternoon had so effectively diminished the usual number of passers-by anyway that only one man had bought a ticket—probably because the benches in Prospect Park would be so wet.

At this somewhat depressing response to his first effort to entertain Brooklyn, Marcus Loew decided to call off the performance, which was already under way. So he sidled down the aisle to where the theater's only patron sat in lonely grandeur. Loew tapped the fellow affably on the shoulder and in his most apologetic manner explained that his admission had all been a silly mistake on the part of the woolly-witted boy in the box-office. There was, as a matter of fact, to be no performance at all that afternoon.

"Then," asked the puzzled patron of the lively arts, "what's all this going on?" And he waved an inclusive hand at an energetic team in shiny high hats who were dancing away for dear life up on the lighted stage.

"Oh, but the public isn't coming in," Loew replied, casting a pensive eye on the acres of empty seats which did, in truth, seem rather to justify that dismal prophecy. "You see," he continued, brightening up at his own resourcefulness, "this is just a dress rehearsal."

"Fine," cried the delighted patron; (Continued on page 163)



Nicholas Schenck, who is vice-president and general manager of Loew, Inc.

By Adela Rogers St. Johns

A Free



Ace had himself under control now. Not a trace of emotion. Jan had said: "I have to go away. I won't see you before I go. I am writing you a letter."

The Story So Far:

BRILLIANT, erratic Stephen Ashe, one of the greatest criminal lawyers of the West, and his daughter Jan—extraordinary figures to the people of their world—were a constant source of anxiety to their family. For Stephen, embittered by the artificial, faithless woman who had been his wife, had determined that Jan should be free of women's artifices. She was to be a "free soul." Untrammelled by convention, she was to look upon the truths of life.

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So it was that Jan, at sixteen, was facing one truth that filled her heart with fear and regret—Stephen's growing desire for drink, which even his love for her could not control. Helplessly she watched while the habit dragged him down relentlessly.

It was at this time, while she was little more than a girl in age, though not in knowledge of life, that Dwight Sutro began his pursuit of Jan, determined to win her and prepared to go to any lengths to accomplish his end. Son of a millionaire newspaper owner, he had chosen to enter Stephen Ashe's office instead of his father's. And for a time Jan found a new thrill in his love-making.

But he was swept from her mind when she met Ace Wilfong, who had begun life as a street gamin and was now known to San Francisco as the king of the gamblers. At the moment of their meeting, Jan knew that Ace was the only man she could ever love. But Ace looked up to her as to a star, so high above him did she seem, this daughter of the aristocratic Ashes; it was long before he spoke to her of love. And when he finally took her in his arms, Jan knew that she had never really loved before.

Before Jan had a chance to talk with her father, her Aunt Dorothea came to beg her to spare her long-suffering family the disgrace that her marriage with a professional gambler must be, inevitably.

"Nothing on earth can keep me from marrying him," Jan told her. But Stephen, interrupting their conversation, dismissed his sister. Then, for the first time in his life, he said to Jan, "You can't."

Jan was hurt and bewildered by her father's attitude; Ace was square and brave and clean; she could never love anyone else. But Stephen was not to be moved. He could not let her be unhappy and ashamed, he said, as this marriage outside the social pale would make her. And in the end Jan realized that she must choose between the two men who loved her, her father and Ace Wilfong.

"We're all of us gamblers," she told Stephen then. "I will make you a bet. I will not marry Ace Wilfong unless you drink . . . I give up the man I love because you think he is bad for me—you give up the drink you love because I know it is killing you. Will you take my gamble?"

"I'll take it," said Stephen Ashe.

NOW the strange thing was, of course, that in the days following that gambler's bargain which Jan Ashe made with her father, she sided against herself. She sided against her lover. She was for her father. And yet she had never realized so clearly the deep sweetness of her love for Ace Wilfong as she did in those dim, flat moments after the sealing of that pact whereby she was to give up any thought of marriage with Ace Wilfong, and Stephen Ashe was to give up his master vice.

But she did not regret her bargain. Far from it. And she was for her daddy. Oh, absolutely! But, she was discovering, it hurt very much. For if he won, she must lose, she and Ace.

She sat looking at the telephone and finally she went to it and called a number. Her heart drummed in her ears and her throat was dry. Poor Ace! It was tough on him.

A woman's voice answered, and Jan asked for Ace. It was very easy to hear Jan Ashe over the telephone. Her voice was crisp and clear and clipped. She spoke beautifully. Gwennie Wilfong was conscious of that instantly, of the lovely, clear words, the clipped, arrogant voice. Unconsciously, when she answered, she tried to imitate it and failed.

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A Novel of a Girl who Smashed the Conventions of Women

Soul

She went back to the breakfast table. "Somebody wants you on the phone," she said.

Ace Wilfong transferred a waffle to his plate. "Who is it?" he asked. The world stood off from Ace that morning. He cared not for the world or anything in it but Jan Ashe. "Who is it?" he said again to his sister, and though he had not slept—actually he had fought sleep, for he wished to think of Jan and of the future—his face was as vital and as bright as sun on the desert.

"I'm sure I don't know," said Gwennie. But she did.

Ace went slowly, holding his stunning wine-red dressing-gown about him. Very quiet his street clothes always were, but he had in dressing-gowns a taste almost as barbaric as that of Stephen Ashe himself.

He said, "Hello."

And the arrogant voice, crisped around the edges with a smile, said, "Hello yourself. And how are you this morning?"

There was a little pause.

He said, "Is it Jan?"

"But certainly it is Jan"—very indignantly. "What other lady, may I ask, were you expecting to ring you up so early in the morning?"

"I wasn't expecting any lady at all, dear," said Ace Wilfong, "but the point is that I wasn't expecting you. I have been thinking for hours of telephoning you. It has been a temptation all night long to telephone you. And ever since I got up I have been pretending to read the paper and to eat my breakfast, but I have really been saying to myself, 'How soon may I call her up and be sure that she is real?' You are real, aren't you, darling?"

There was a sound over the wire that was almost like a sob, but probably it was only one of those strange noises that telephones make, for instantly afterwards Jan said, "Oh, I am real enough! Too real, I think. Anyway, I called you up to tell you—"

Her voice grew fainter, so that it was very easy for him to break in, "To tell me, Jan, that you love me? Do you love me? Do you still love me this morning?"

"What very fickle ladies you must have been used to!" said the voice, and if its gaiety was not quite genuine, that was a matter impossible to determine over the telephone. "And besides, I simply will not discuss love over the telephone at this hour. What I wanted to say—who was that, Ace, who answered your telephone?"

He chuckled. "That was my sister, Miss Curiosity." Sisters under their skins then, the white stars of heaven and the fireflies of the night. Not much, but a little.

"Oh? Your sister. I suppose I should have known her—some day. Do you think, Ace, that your sister would have liked me, a little? Women don't much, as a rule."

Rapidly Ace Wilfong went over that speech in his mind. He did not like its tenses. All through him the danger signal, that outside sense of his that made him a great gambler, that warned him of things he could not see, clanged like a burglar-alarm. There was something wrong there.

"Jan, darling"—very quietly. He tried to make his voice sound like a rock a rock upon which a girl might stand in any storm.

"Yes?"

"Has anything happened?"



Illustrations by Marshall Frantz

"Yes, dear. Something has happened."

"It isn't that you have found you—don't love me, after all?"

"No—oh, no! But—I am writing you a letter to explain. I—I have to go away for a little while. I won't see you before I go, and so I am writing you a letter. I am going with my dad."

His brows were knit as though he were in pain and his face was dark and lined with concentration. He wanted to pierce through her words and he could not.

"Couldn't you wait just a little while so I could see you? Oh, Jan, I—"

playing a hand blind the best thing to do was to wait and go cautiously.

The voice was very faint now, as though it were squeezed out between two sobs, but for all that it was still arrogant and crisp. "If you will tell me where you live—imagine that, I don't know where you live—I will send the letter to you right away."

He told her the address. "How long do you expect to be gone?" He had himself completely under control now. Not a trace of emotion in his cold, quiet voice.

And she was casual. They might quite well have been two acquaintances discussing vacation plans. "I don't know. I rather like going off like this, on an hour's notice, and not knowing where you're going or when you're coming back. I'm rather sick of always knowing just where I'm going and when I'm coming back."

A silence. The wires hummed with the noises of the city that stretched between them. Then she said, "Good-by, Ace."

"Jan—"

"Yes, dear?"

"I don't understand. I don't know what this is all about. I hate it. But—I trust you. I love you. Darling, *darling*, I cannot—but you know that there is nothing—"

"I know, Ace. Good-by."

"Good-by."

Ace Wilfong went back to the breakfast room.

His sister, who had been listening with white fury, looked at him once searchingly and then she poured him a hot cup of very black coffee.

"You'd better drink that," she said. Poor little Gwennie! At that moment she would have given the very blood of her heart to comfort her brother. And yet her voice, that she meant to be tender, considerate, came out as cold and irritated as a suspicious wife's.

Ace Wilfong looked at her and then he laughed. It was good to hear, that laugh—courageous, unbeaten, a very profession of faith. He ran both hands through his hair and it stood up like a crest.

"I don't need your coffee, Gwennie," he said superbly. "Why, I'm not afraid. That girl—if you knew her, Gwennie. She's like—she's like some race-horses I've seen. Make 'em carry all the weight in the race, make 'em run in the mud, put a stable boy up, leave 'em at the post—and still you know you've got a chance for your money because they're always trying. They come sailing down the stretch and win somehow. That's because they've got a thoroughbred's heart. And, Gwen, that's all a woman's got to have. My Jan's like that."

A faint pink had grown in Gwennie's cheeks. Men could love like that, and she had been passed by.

"Are you going to marry her?" she asked.

Ace Wilfong winced away from that pointed reminder of the horrible suspense under which his heart labored, waiting for that letter that was to explain everything. He scowled at her. He hesitated. Then, with a grin that was like drawn steel, he said, "Yes, I am."

Gwennie's fingers tortured her lower lip. "She isn't the wife I'd have picked out for you," she said.

Ace Wilfong's laugh rang out. "Who's asking you to pick out a wife for me? I can darn well pick out my own wife, and I've done it. And a good job too, Gwennie; you'll adore her."

"Maybe," said Gwennie, between thin lips, "but all the same, you'd have done a lot better to pick a woman of your own class. I'd like to see you married to somebody that'd make you a good home, like I've always done."

IN THE lightning flash of her words, Ace Wilfong suddenly saw himself, ragged, dirty, with his basket of violets, standing before that funny, imperious little kid who was Stephen Ashe's daughter and the granddaughter of Senator Ashe and old Deborah Beecher Ashe. The dull crimson stung his face, but he would not give in to it.

They were man and woman—they loved. When this miracle had happened to him, need he question it, pry into it, uncover old days when she was the princess and he was the dusty peasant boy? Well, all the fairy-tale books told about the shepherd boy who won the fairy princess.

He said amiably, "Where'd you get these funny ideas of yours, Gwen?"

But his eyes were wratched. Was that why? Was that what was in the letter? No—not from Jan. Not from Jan.

Gwennie, shamed by that hurt in his eyes, said hurriedly: "I didn't mean anything. Only I don't think a girl brought up like that makes as good a wife. She's not practical."

"No," said Ace Wilfong dreamily, "she's not practical. That's one of the things I love about her. She is not gentle. I do not like gentle women. She is not soft, but then, I do not like soft women. I do not even know if she is good, for I've never yet found two people who had the same definition for goodness. I only know she fills my heart, and my arms, and my eyes, and my soul forever."

He got up and went to the window and looked down the street. Against the light his head was dark, his throat strong.

"I'd hate her forever if she made you unhappy."

Coaxingly, boyishly he said: "Gwennie, love her for my sake. Understand her for my sake. She says women don't like her. She's never known many women. She hasn't any mother. If I've been good to you, Gwennie, repay it to Jan. If she comes to me, help me to make her happy. Help me to keep her content."

Gwennie never had to answer that plea. She burdened her soul with no promises. A taxi had stopped at the door. A driver in a uniform of olive drab came up the steps. He was only halfway up when he became conscious of a tall, dark young man framed in the doorway.

"Hello," said the taxi-driver pleasantly. "Your name Wilfong?"

"Yes."

"Well, I got a letter for you."

THIS was the letter which Jan Ashe had written to Ace Wilfong when she hung up the telephone. It smelled of tobacco, it smelled of violets, and it was scrawled in her funny, kid hand writing over the ordinary hotel paper, for Jan never wasted time or money upon such trivialities as expensive stationery.

"I am writing this to you, my darling," it said, without any beginning such as a letter should have, but rather as though she actually spoke to him, "because I simply cannot bear to see you. It would hurt me too much right now and I think, maybe, it would hurt you too much, too. For I love you. I have never loved you so much as I love you now. Will you remember that, Ace, my darling, and maybe it will comfort you just a little?"

"And I would like to say to you, too, that I have never loved anyone else as I love you. We have not talked of those things, but if now or in times to come people suggest to you that I have loved other men, you may tell them quite truthfully that I never did. For the me that loves you is quite a different person from that Jan Ashe of whom you may have heard and who, they tell me, is no better than she should be."

"No, for you, Ace, I am different. I never had a brother. And I do not love you like a brother. Oh, not in the least! And yet, loving you as much like a lover as a woman very well could, there is also in that love something of the sort of thing I should like to have felt for a brother."

"I know it is not fair to keep you like this, waiting. But I must wrap you round with my love, darling, so that what I am going to say will not hurt more than need be. Ace, I cannot marry you. And I cannot even tell you why. You must guess that for yourself. Coming from me, it might wound you so."

"But this much I will tell you. I have made a great bargain. You are a gambler, and you must gamble with me in this. I am giving you up, and daddy is giving up that thing which we talked of the other night and which you know is killing him, body and soul. He does not want me to marry you, though the reason I will not state. But he is game. He said if I will give you up, he will give up that drink. And if he does not, he will not oppose our marriage. So I am going away with him."

"For you see, darling, I must help him to beat me—to beat us—if I can. For I would sacrifice us both if it might save him. He is more to me than anything else in the world. More even than you, Ace. And if we can save him, wouldn't we gladly give up our happiness? Not our love, for that I shall never give up. I will shut it up very tight in my heart."

"I ask you only to make it as easy for me as you can, dear. I know what I must do, and you would not have me do otherwise. I could not if I would. So—help me. Let me stand side by side with him and help him in his fight."

"And if this is good-by for always, then it is good-by for always, and that's that. So let us not be dramatic about it, Ace. Let us say good luck and God bless you, and go our ways rejoicing that we once loved each other and maybe always will, my darling, if there is such a thing as forever-and-ever love, and though some people do not believe in it, I will tell you a great secret—I do."

Thus it ended and at the very last the writing was bolder and clearer, so that it was very easy to read, which Jan's writing was not as a rule. That, she always said, was because she had never been to school.



Stephen and Jan followed whichever trail promised most of beauty and solitude. And it seemed to Jan that she had been reborn after an existence of strife and sorrow.

When she had written it, Jan consigned it to a bell-boy for delivery—she was not sentimental about little things—and went into her father's bedroom.

He had dressed carefully. But for those worn white hollows under his cheek-bones, but for the dark, hard lines under his eyes, but for the curiously nervous fingers that were restless and constantly in motion, he might have been the Stephen Ashe of old.

And thinking this as she looked at him, Jan's heart was flooded with a great wave of love and tenderness and pity.

"I say, dad"—her smile had a new sensitiveness, it may be, but otherwise it was quite the grin of her kid days—"let's take ourselves a vacation."

Stephen Ashe, not looking at her, selected a handkerchief to match his raiment and folded it carefully into his breast pocket. "On the contrary, my child," he said humorously, "I was just thinking that it might be well for me to get to work. The family exchequer appears to be on its last legs."

"This is too much," said Jan, still with her faint grin. "You mustn't reform all in a heap this way. You'll be sick."

We could do a real economical vacation. My idea was to take the horses and go off in the hills somewhere. I'm not what you'd call an expert camper, but we could pick out the little hotels—I prefer cooties to snakes myself, speaking literally. I can put patches in the seats of our riding habits and they will seldom be noticed if we sit most of the time. Would you like that?"

"I think it would be great," said Stephen Ashe, and he had hard work to keep his lips from trembling, for it seemed to him that he had never loved this bright-eyed child of his as he loved her now; and yet deep in his soul a great fear kept him constant company. If he should fail!

"Then let's go," said Jan, turning on her heel and leaving him.

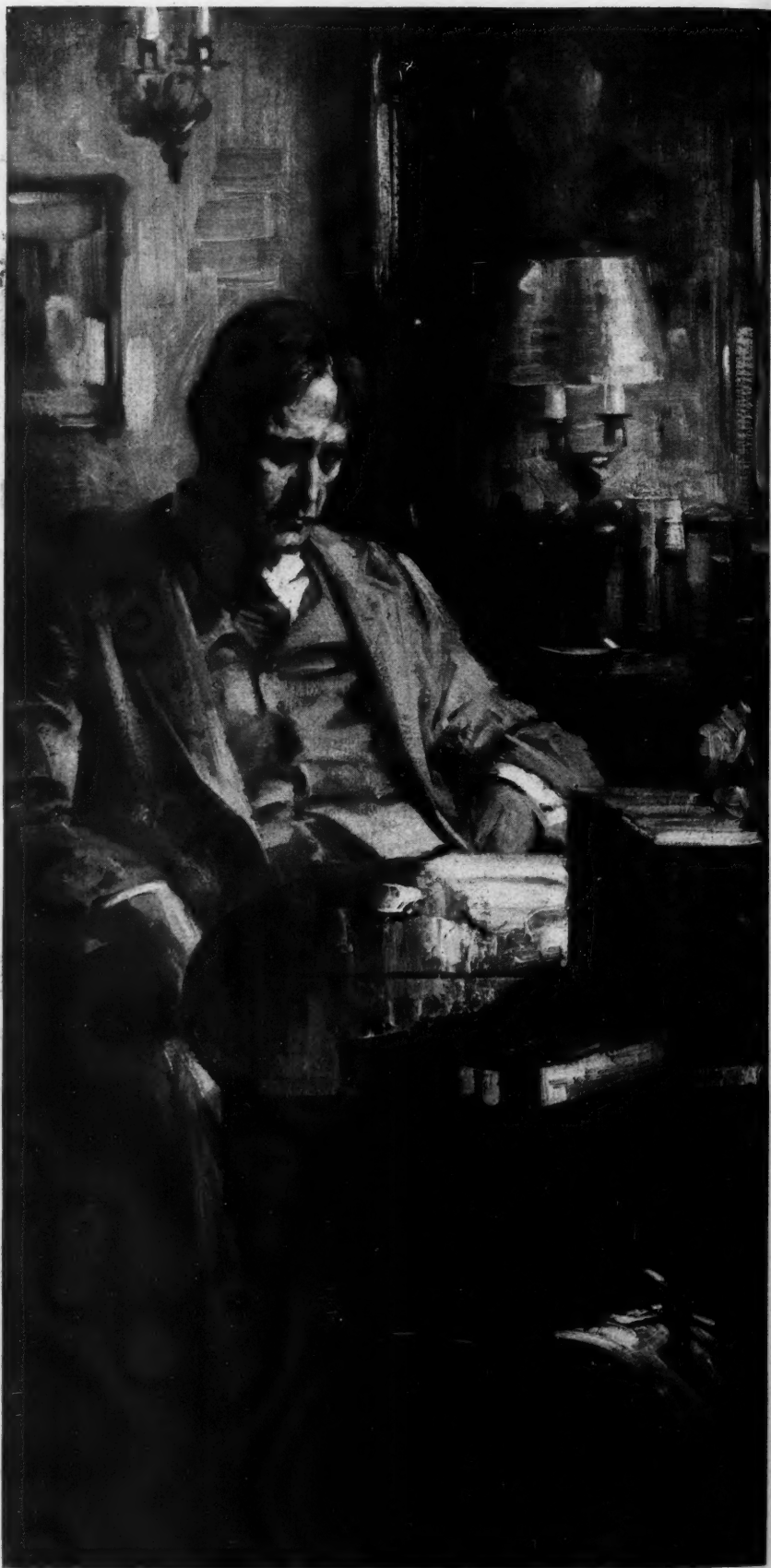
Thus it was that Jan on her bright sorrel and Stephen Ashe upon his big bay rode off into the sunset side by side in that first campaign of the war against Stephen Ashe's enemy.

Jan had not hurried their departure, though each time the telephone rang her heart whirled like a frightened partridge. Alone over her careless preparations—her father had gone out with Mac to tend to some business or other—she wondered if Ace Wilfong would call, would come. And knew that he would not. That would not be playing the game. She had asked him to help her and he would. Her confidence in him was so perfect and serene that she scarcely realized how wonderful a thing it was. But she pictured him once or twice with that letter in his hand. She wondered how he would take it.

As a matter of fact, he took it standing up and very quietly. Lady Luck had dealt him a desperate blow this time, but she should have no satisfaction from him. When he came out of his room late that afternoon, immaculate, lean, dark, Gwennie stared at him curiously, but she could make nothing of him. Ace wore his own face as a mask, that was all, and it was expressionless, it was as usual, he carried no outward scar. That, of course, is the gambler's way.

The Ashes rode east, they rode north. They followed whichever trail promised most of beauty and of solitude, and the whole of northern California, which is the most glorious spot upon this particular star of God, unfolded before them, from the opal depths of the Pacific to the pearly snow wall of the high Sierras.

Many days they rode, making twenty-five and thirty miles a day, so alike as they rode in their slack and careless grace, through April gold of the San Joaquin,



C"Well, dad, you've lost," Jan said calmly. "I alone. I'd rather drop out and let people forget me



"I couldn't make the grade, Jan," said Steve. "Something's burned out. Just let me than to hang around and have them sorry for a has-been—poor old Steve Asbe."

upward along the magic Tuolumne, into the May glory of the Yosemite. And then they worked their way back through the Sacramento Valley and across into Mendocino County, where the Russian River and the Eel run through that country immortalized by Dick Furniss in his books.

The beauty of it was almost insupportable to Jan. Growing pains had left her sensitive as the buds of a poplar in the spring. And it seemed to her that she had been reborn after an existence of strife and sorrow.

"To think," she said as they reined in upon the edge of a gentian meadow, flung billowing before them like the cloak of some careless goddess fleeing from the dawn, "to think this was actually here all the time."

Her father looked at her and his eyes were wet. His eyes often grew wet in those days when he looked at Jan. Such a little thing she seemed, astride the bright and dangerous sorrel, in her shabby riding-habit and her gleaming, polished boots. Her head was bare and the sun had burned and roughened her short hair and browned her skin to match the outside leaf of a water-lily.

His eyes were wet for the love she bore him and the love he bore her and this mess in which they had somehow become involved. He was not inclined to admit, most of the time, that it had been his fault. Self-pity and self-contempt fought within him, and left him usually with a deep impatience at the whole proceedings. He had never before in his life endured real humiliation, he had never been down, and it angered him and his pride grew raw and dangerous. Never before had he known restraint, and it galled him wofully.

And all the time, in the depths of his being, a great fear kept him company.

The days—the days he could bear. Sometimes as they rode under the silvery firs and the tall, straight pines that blessed them with outstretched arms and soft incense, he would grip the horn of his saddle as the slow, merciless tide of desire set in upon him. He knew so well its course, and the knowledge that he must once more endure its passage sickened him at the outset. That first dull throb, a mere gentle drumming upon each of his nerves. The slow-mounting ache, conquering him inch by inch, until the sweat blinded him and his restless fingers were numb. And finally the veritable flame in his blood, lapping him with a thousand tongues of torture, while he swayed there blind to every sight, deaf to every sound, impervious to every sensation except this one of mortal craving.

Never before had he allowed it to run its (Continued on page 149)

I Tried to be my Husband's Business Partner

FOUR years ago I gave up writing advertising campaigns and copy and went into the boys' wholesale clothing business with my husband. My husband had sold me the idea. I say sold because he was and is a selling man and never will or should try to be anything else.

Two unfortunate experiences with partners had forced him to decide between going out of business and selling for someone else or getting a good inside man.

Now it isn't an easy thing for a one-man concern to hire a good inside man. He usually wants an interest in the business. That was the question—did it pay to try again giving a person, however valuable as a workman, an interest in one's business? My husband and I talked it over, considered it from all angles, and decided it didn't.

It was then my husband said to me: "Why don't you come with me? Women know kids' stuff better than men. Most of the infants' and children's buyers are women, and quite a few of the boys'-wear buyers. I know you're making good money now, but I believe you'd make more in the end if you came with me. It would be fun to be together and it would mean so much to have someone I could trust on the job when I'm out on the road."

This sort of talk lasting over a period of several weeks absolutely destroyed a resolve I had made some time before to let nothing interfere with or take me from my own work. I went into the boys' clothing business with my husband.

Naturally the only way I know of going into a thing in which I'm interested is to jump in with both feet. And that's what I did, literally.

I started by cleaning house. I set the people we had with us working so fast and furiously we couldn't see one another for dust. Whew! It was dirty! Woolens, linings, buttons, thread, rags, paper, twine, tickets, canvas, chalk, patterns and what-not were thrown hither and yon. We sorted, discarded, piled, swept, dusted and arranged. And when we had finished my husband was thoroughly uncomfortable. For one reason, he couldn't find a thing—and for another, it didn't look to him like a clothing house. It was too neat.

But that didn't put the damper on my spirits. It looked lots better to me. And that was only a beginning.

I bought some second-hand tables and chairs, and stained and varnished them and covered the tops of the tables with green felt. I bought more stain and varnish for the floors—and did the work myself. I don't suppose I shall ever forget it; down on my knees in that loft at Eighth and Broadway trying to brush enough varnish into those awful floors so that if you dropped your pencil you wouldn't get slivers in your fingers picking it up.

But it was fun. And after the floors, desks, tables and chairs had dried, and the rug was down and the windows washed, it looked good to me. I felt as if we were ready to do business and my attitude toward my husband was "bring on the business."

Our understanding was that I should select woolens, trimmings and styles, look after work in the shop and wait on trade in the house. My husband would do the outside selling.

My first selection of woolens gave me a decided thrill. We went up to a wholesale woolen house and went through the ranges suitable for our line. I started indicating this, that and the other number with absolute confidence. My husband soon stopped me . . . Light colors hadn't sold last year. You couldn't use so and so for a boy's coat. Plaids didn't cut to advantage. Et cetera.

Right then and there I almost had cold feet. Perhaps after all I didn't know anything about the boys' line. To be sure, I had dressed two boys for about ten years, and looked at enough boys' clothing during that time to stock several departments, but it was possible, I had to admit, that I might not know what other mothers wanted. However, I felt fairly sure I did, so I said to my husband, "Just let me finish selecting anyway;

then you can throw out what you don't like and add those you do."

When I had finished, the salesman, who up to that time had offered no suggestions, brought out a list and smilingly showed it to us. The numbers I had selected were the biggest selling numbers in the ranges we had looked through.

Dumb luck, of course. At least that's what I said to my husband and he agreed with me—for, said he, "You never could have sold those colors last year."

I didn't retort that buyers didn't want last year's goods, and you certainly couldn't sell what you didn't show.

Then came the question of quantity. I wanted to buy at least fifty percent more goods than my husband did. Again the salesman proved my ally. He suggested that we cover ourselves on the amount I wanted, and later if we found we couldn't use this quantity we would be at liberty to cancel.

We did this, and not only did we use every yard of goods, but we ordered more, paid more for it as woolens had gone up, and paid expressage to get it quickly.

I SUSPECT the luck we had with the woolens gave me enough confidence to attack the patterns.

Have you ever seen the patterns used in the wholesale manufacture of garments? I never had, and although my husband had been brought up among them, a top sleeve looked to him as much like a half knicker as anything else. That's why he was really concerned when I started fussing around with the patterns.

The day he saw me trimming a piece off a shoulder and changing a collar line he became fairly excited. "You're going to spoil the thing. Don't you know a pattern can't be tampered with?"

I said: "Where did you get these patterns? How long have you had them?"

He said: "Some of them were my father's and he knew how to put a garment together."

I said: "He certainly did, and if he were here he'd do considerable changing on these."

I knew that was true. My husband's father used to pick up a pattern, cut a bit off here, change a line there and hand it back to the horrified designer. He was a genius. He knew his business as few clothing men know theirs. And he was a pioneer manufacturer. I felt as though I owed it to him to do something about those patterns, and I did. That very afternoon I went out and started a course in designing.

It's surprising how much you can learn in a short time if you really want to learn it.

It wasn't long before I could feel a piece of goods and tell whether it was thirty or thirty-four ounce; could classify the various grades of sateen, alpaca and silesia, knew horn buttons from ivory; and after going through a season of handling fur collars, it wasn't so difficult to throw out those that were tender or brittle or in some way imperfect.

It was an interesting business, but it was also a seasonal business, whereas the advertising game had not been.

Besides, I was beginning to realize that it most assuredly was not "our" business. It was my husband's. And while I am sure he used the word "I" from force of habit, it would have meant much to me to have heard "we" even once in a while.

Buyers time after time complimented him on the line we were showing, and laughingly teased him on the fact that it was better and more complete than he had ever shown. They'd say: "You needed a woman here after all. Don't forget they're the ones who buy the kids' clothes."

And my husband would look at me in the friendliest way and say, "Oh, she's learning, all right." It was as though he had patted me on the head and said, "Good little girl. You'll know something in time."

Of course I hated to feel that way, but I couldn't help it, and it wasn't long before I was seriously convinced that I was simply

By Florence S. London



knit wear, wash suits for kiddies, girls' and women's apparel, but I've never heard of a woman who traveled with a line of boys' coats and suits.

Anyway, the clothing business wasn't dull, but the question I started asking myself at the beginning of the second year was, where did I come in?

The latter half of the second year I asked my husband this question. It made him cross. He said I had no patience. Very likely he was right, but every month from that time on I mourned more and more my beloved independence.

You see, there had been no talk of money when I entered my husband's business. He wasn't hiring me, although I do think he should have considered the fact that I was giving up a nice weekly pay envelop.

I don't suppose husbands think of those things. There may be wives who don't. I did after I'd spent for personal use the few hundred dollars I had saved and wondered where more was to come from. I expect that I really hinted I needed a few dollars. My husband promptly gave me a few.

That wasn't good for me, of course. It gave me a sort of hang-dog feeling and I started making comparisons. I compared the position I was holding with my husband to the positions I had held before.

I had been used to sitting down with men of big business and talking over with them and planning a campaign. I knew these men regarded me as a person who takes her work seriously. I had a number of years of fairly successful work to my credit.

Yet here I was—it was best for me to face the truth—an absolute non-entity in my husband's business so far

as my husband was concerned. That's what hurt. There were plenty of outsiders who said extremely pleasant things about what in their opinion I had done for the business. But that didn't help me any. I knew, after the second year, that I couldn't go on indefinitely. The only reason I stayed the third year was because I wanted to persuade my husband to liquidate and once more devote his entire time to selling. Finally he did sell out—but only after I had kept after him a long time.

We've both been happier this past year. When I look at him I don't have to feel that he's my boss. On his part, he doesn't need to depend on my help in a business way, and that's better for him.

I expect some people who read this will think I mean to imply that a man and his wife can't be in business together and get along satisfactorily. I don't mean any such thing. I've seen a business managed by the husband and wife with the wife boss. I've seen the same combination with the husband boss. But I've yet to see a business that belonged to them.

I only know that if a married woman earning a good salary asked me for advice about going into business with her husband, I'd say: "How much is he going to pay you? As much as you're making now? Or is he going to take you in as a partner, giving you a share of the profits? If he is, well and good—that's a business proposition. Let him hire you if he wants to—be his partner if he'll let you—but don't go with him as his wife."

the tail to my husband's kite. I was an appendage to keep the thing from falling, but I certainly was not to be allowed to soar on the same level.

My husband constantly reminded me that selling was the important thing. I agreed with him. It doesn't take any special brand of intelligence to realize that no matter how good your product is, if you don't go out and show it you certainly won't sell it. And my contention was that my husband did not spend enough time selling goods.

He is a real salesman. I believe he can sell more goods with less effort than anyone I've ever known. And that was really the trouble. I wanted to double the business. He was fairly satisfied with what he did.

I had to give in the first year, but the second year I simply couldn't stand it. I said: "You don't go out early enough. The big houses get the first picking."

He said: "Half the buyers aren't ready. If you think you know better, try it yourself."

And I did. I packed two cases of samples and went up to Buffalo and worked back towards New York.

I did business. The first order I took sent a thrill through me that I'll never forget.

Of course when I returned I said the only reason I'd done business was because it was the first time a woman had gone out on the road with a boys' line. There are women selling infants'



The Drama of a Poor Dub

REVEILLE bit into the darkness. The tents stirred uneasily. Marines and sailors of the Flagship's landing force, camped ashore at Guantanamo for target practise, reached for things under their field cots, grunting and swearing in the dark; a few men lighted, behind tent-flaps, forbidden candles—issued, these, for the sole and holy purpose of blackening rifle sights. There were confused small noises that shaded into a general clinking of mess-pans.

The east grew pale, and the great morning star of the Cuban winter, that had been golden, now blazed silver before the sun. The Marine Officer raised himself on his elbow and saw that the tents made a black serrated line against the sky, and the hills to the east, beyond the rifle ranges, were smoky purple with brittle edges. Chow line was forming on the galley. The blue-jackets, all in white, showed up solidly; you could see only the white undershirts of the Marines, for their khaki trousers and sunburnt hides were still the color of the dusk.

The line was punctuated with glowing cigaret ends; men sucked hungrily at the day's first smoke.

"Come on, Bozo—gimme a drag at that butt—left mine in my bunk."

"Yeah, you did! Lay offa Bozo, you low moocher—I got seconds on that butt myself."

From the anchorage off Deer Point, all the ships struck two bells—five o'clock. They were not together. The line commented:

"Funny, how you hear things over water. That's a light cruiser, that—kinder high."

"Yeh. And lissen—that's a destroyer's bell; shrill, like."

"Very plain, though. Those destroyers is way up near the coaling station."

"Hi! there's ole Rocky's bell—last one, as usual—quarter-master's sho' hard to rouse."

Across the tent, the Marine Officer's Lieutenant slept profoundly. The Marine Officer settled back himself and felt hazily for the threads of the desirable dream that reveille cut into; bugles before sunup are hard on dreams. Then his trumpet blew two long wails—bumps, that says five minutes to mess-gear. The Marine Officer heaved out of his blankets and regarded his boots morosely.

"This settin' an example to the troops is the devil of a nuisance, so early in the mornin'."

He threw his boots at his junior, with effect. The lieutenant's feet hit the deck.

"Soupy, soupy, soupy, and not a single bean," sang the bugle, obscenely cheerful. The chow line passed into the galley, and there arose a pleasant clatter of eating tools, where the men squatted in the growing light over corn-bill hash and coffee. Presently the officers were growling over theirs. Being officers, they had a table and a bench, and a sad-eyed Filipino boy to explain the eggs were bad.

Outside, the camp filled canteens and ran rags through its rifles, and made all things ready for the day's shooting. The blue-jackets were working with rifles and Lewis guns, and the Marines were doing postgraduate courses in automatic weapons—light and heavy Brownings. And the Gunnery Sergeant of Marines entered formally with his daily ammunition report.

"Sir," said the Gunnery Sergeant, saluting, "small arms ammunition on hand, fifteen thousand rounds of thirty-caliber and two

thousand seven hundred rounds of forty-five. Small arms ammunition expended to date"—he consulted his memorandum—"two hundred thousand eight hundred thirty rounds, sir. Marines firing all automatic rifles and two machine guns on D-range, as ordered. First platoon on the firing-line; second platoon detailed to butts."

"All right, Gunnery Sergeant; thank you. I want twenty men to coach the bluejackets on A-range. Pick 'em out, ten from each platoon. And"—for the Marine Officer is also Range Officer, in charge of all instruction in small arms and supplies for the same—"better make out a requisition for some more thirty-caliber—say, fifteen thousand. Send it off on the eleven o'clock boat."

"Aye, aye, sir!" The Gunnery Sergeant saluted and went out, smartly.

"Hear that?" the Marine Officer added thoughtfully. "Over two hundred thousand rounds. An' we've fired over five hundred men—about forty percent of them never had a rifle in their hands before, I'd say. An' we haven't had a single accidental discharge, or a casualty of any kind."

"That's right, sir. Now that destroyer gang on C yesterday, with just fifty men ashore, got a fellow shot."

Police call went, and sailors and Marines spread over the camp area, intent on trash. Others swept the company streets with brooms.

"There's your boy friend, Will," said the junior ensign, meanly, to the Lieutenant of Marines—"there, cruisin' around the galley."

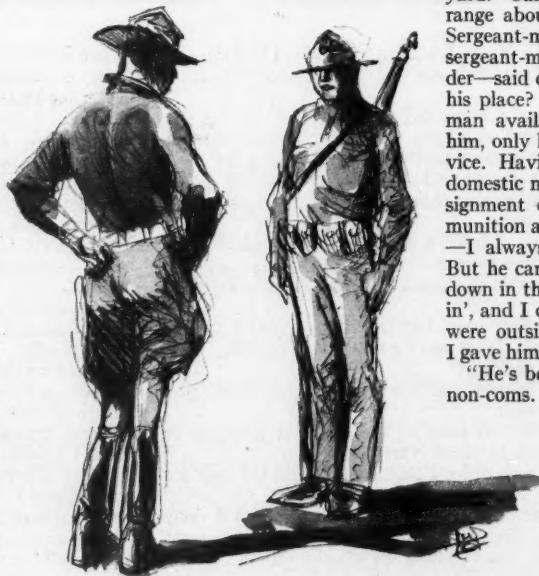
You saw an odd-looking little Marine, deplorably unmilitary. His nose was the biggest part of his face. His shoulders slanted back and his stomach curved out, and he walked with a twist to the left.

"Recruitin' officer that picked that fish will undoubtedly go to everlastin' hell," observed the Marine Officer.

"How'd they ever saw him off on you, Cap'n—you fellows always swankin' around about having the best-lookin' guard in the Navy, an' all that," said the senior Naval Officer wickedly.

"Well, I have only myself to blame. Had a man go sick the day we shoved off from the yard. Called the barracks to arrange about his transfer ashore. Sergeant-major—you know that sergeant-major—great glad-hander—said didn't I want a man in his place? Said they had a fine man available; wanted to keep him, only he was due for sea service. Havin' my mind on certain domestic matters and a new consignment of trench mortar ammunition and so forth, I said sure—I always take what's offered. But he came aboard when I was down in the forward hold, check-in', and I didn't see him until we were outside. I was very mad. I gave him to Will, here.

"He's been a great grief to his non-coms. Had to use sand and canvas to get him clean. An' he annoyed all hands by bein' sea-sick in the hammock nettings. But he's comin' out. Been five years in the service,



A New Story of the Marines

By Capt. John W. Thomason, Jr.

Illustrations by
The Author
drawn at Guantanamo
at the time the story
occurred.



and committed no offenses—not vicious, just a bum—spent most of his time bein' transferred. You know—the kind of a man that a commanding officer sees and says, Good Lord: put him on the first draft out. I don't think he's had a chance, ever. We'll make something out of him yet—only, he does walk with a list to port."

"Well," pointed out the Lieutenant, "he looks nice an' clean this morning. Washed his shirt an' everything. And got a hair cut. I told him yesterday that we were raisin' no Sutherland Sisters or Circassian Belles in this outfit. You know, he's in Bogart's squad—the runts; broke their hearts when I put him with them. Said he spoiled the looks of their squad. And they've raised Cain with him, until he's snappin' out of it. See him coalin' ship the other day? He worked harder'n anybody—though I did holler my head off at him several times for gettin' in the way of those coal bags—once I was sure a coal bag was goin' to plaster him all over the side, but somebody jerked him clear. He used to be dumb and dirty; now he's just dumb, an' he's respondin' to treatment—I'm gettin' to like him."

"No, it isn't bad to have one blank file in an outfit—like that bird the Chief keeps up, in the black gang. You know; a man looks at him and feels better about himself right away. Sort of a horrible example—good for morale."

"HE is easier to look at," noted the Marine Officer. "Credit to you, to make a soldier out of an egg like that. It's very encouragin'—I must make him my compliments," and he lounged out. "Oh, Kemper—here a minute."

Private Kemper wheeled, saluted and came to attention, even making an effort to bring his stomach to the perpendicular.

"Son, you look very smart this mornin'. Hair cut an' shave are vastly improvin' to you. Keep it up. You want to be a credit to us, you know."

"Aye, aye, sir. Privut Kemper aims to, sir," and Private Kemper, dismissed, trotted off happily.

The sun came up over Cuba, and at once it was hot, and the shadows were hard and blue. Assembly went, and the butts details shoved off without rifles, followed by the firing parties, singing, "Oh, I wouldn't get fresh, so she made me walk home," and presently the steady crackle of Springfields and the drumming of automatic fire told that all ranges were at work.

The Range Officer goes where he may be needed. He proceeded, as duty bound, to A, where the bluejackets were shooting at the twenty-inch bull's-eye. They fire on that target at all ranges, and this morning they were hitting it with gratifying frequency. All well here; the Range Officer observed details and came away to spend the morning with his Marines.

He found them, with the Lieutenant, finishing up the first range, and getting ready to move back to 300. The automatic-rifle men and their carriers were strolling down by two's, arguing about bursts and the best way to hold a Browning to the target when you want to deliver rapid fire. The machine guns, each in charge of a sergeant, with its selected crew, were coming back also.

They fired from the right of the line, with a long interval between them and everything else; one can't be too careful with machine guns.

"Going good, sir," reported the Lieutenant. "Only, that number two gun is giving trouble—I think it's the ammunition, because we put all new parts in the firing mechanism last night. She jams and sticks on every string. Only got off one good burst. I put the Gunnery Sergeant on her himself."

"We'll look it over, at three hundred. Say! Is that Kemper of that crew there? That——"

"Oh, no, sir—we just let him carry the water-tank; he's strong an' willing. He's ambitious, all at once; said he'd like to learn. But he has special orders about keeping clear."

The two walked back with the machine gun people.

They reached the firing point and stood by the Marine at the field telephone, who was connecting up with the butts. The man made fast his gadgets, twirled the bell-handle and began to call: "Butts! Hello, butts! Firing-line—firing-line——" Behind them, number two gun, a man to each leg of its tripod, came into position. The cover which controls the firing mechanism was raised and the belt disengaged, as safety orders direct. The muzzle was towards the butts, and depressed. The crew halted, except Private Kemper, coming up with the water-tank.

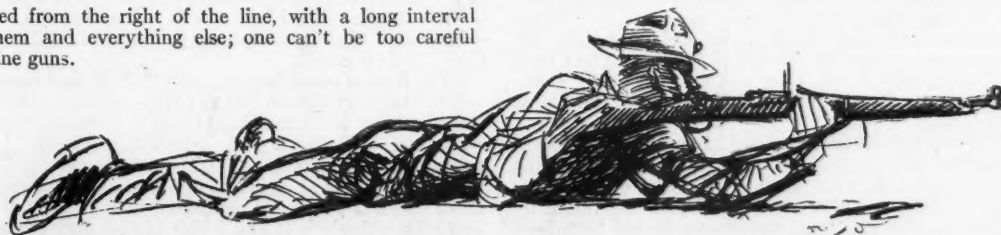
They set the gun down, the man on the right leg of the tripod keeping hold, while a sergeant adjusted the other legs. Private Kemper placed the water-tank against the left leg and turned around. The man on the right leg lowered it, perhaps with a jar. At that instant Private Kemper, in the hesitating manner which characterized him, started to walk across its front. Now, like one obedient to some subtle and appointed prompting, he halted before the blunt muzzle, turned and stopped—nobody ever knew why. No person was touching the gun—the last man, on the right leg, had turned away as he set it down.

The raised cover-plate fell with a sharp little sound. The bolt handle snicked forward with a sharp little sound. The gun fired, one shot. Private Kemper swayed, tried to steady himself, and the Gunnery Sergeant jumped six feet and caught him in time to ease him to the ground. His left arm trailed, and his left leg was bent disturbingly and unusually backward.

Men crowded there. The Lieutenant dived at him and cut his trouser-leg away. A tall private emptied a bandoleer to make a tourniquet, and they yelled for the Navy Hospital corpsman detailed to that range.

The Range Officer ordered: "Van, call the Range Sergeant's office. Five rings. Get an ambulance. Mitchell—Corporal Greiser—take the other phone and cut in on the station line at that post, there—tell the hospital. You birds—get to your places! Keep away from here."

He stood over the group by number two gun and saw that everything was being done that could (Continued on page 156)



By Royal
Brown

*Cecily made it very
clear to Malcolm
that she had had no
desire to be kissed.*

What Price Success?

LOVE may, to the entire satisfaction of the many, be pictorially presented as a pink-kneed young cherub wearing a sash and carrying a bow and arrow. If, however, any such picture had been presented to Malcolm Ritchie this May evening he would have suggested that a graduate of Sing Sing, wearing a mask and carrying a black-jack, would approach nearer the fact. He had the feeling—although he was yet to discover the half of it—that he had been struck down from behind, just when and how he did not know. And if the precise process eluded him, he was even more at a loss to understand why.

In brief, having had the misfortune to fall in what he supposed might be referred to as love—being thirty-plus he was something of a skeptic about love, even in love—Malcolm demanded of himself why in the name of a place not usually mentioned by love's victims, all this emotional disturbance should have been caused by Cecily West.

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The Love Story of an Advertising Man

Granted that Cecily was charming—as she was—she was altogether too cocksure. And if there was one thing he detested in a woman it was cocksureness.

To which Cecily, given the chance, would probably have retorted: "Most cocksure young men *do* seem to feel that way."

She had already said more and worse to him, in spite of the brevity of their acquaintance.

This was a Sunday; they had met for the first time the preceding Thursday. Malcolm had come over to New York from Boston to attend a class dinner and at the same time to confer with his chief—J. P. Randolph of Randolph, Reynolds and Cox, Advertising, with headquarters in a Circassian walnut sheathed suite on Fifth Avenue.

The class dinner had been a wow. The conference had not. Very soon after it had begun, J. P. had pressed a buzzer and Cecily had appeared.

"The Boston office figures, please," J. P. had requested. Now that may give an idea of Cecily's status in the Randolph, Reynolds and Cox organization, but it certainly gives no adequate idea of Cecily herself. She was, obviously, J. P.'s new private sec. As such she had withdrawn to execute J. P.'s command; but, so far as Malcolm was concerned, the space she vacated was still pleasantly permeated with an aura of ash blond hair with a ripple in it and a pair of cool gray-green eyes that merited at least honorable mention.

Illustrations by
Leslie L. Benson



This was Malcolm's first impression of her. He achieved another when she returned, bearing the figures he was prepared to explain, though he deprecated the necessity.

"They're not what I had hoped they would be," he had already admitted frankly. "But you know New England—and New

England advertisers. Since the stock market broke in March, they've been too busy nursing chilblains to talk advertising."

"That is more or less true everywhere," J. P. had replied, as frankly.

And that was J. P. J. P. did not thump his desk and get off a lot of hot air about being interested in results and results only. Nor did he ever stand up with his tummy against a banquet board and passionately assure the members of his organization that a spirit of service and loyalty to Randolph, Reynolds and Cox was the very essence of true manhood. Instead, he exemplified these virtues as naturally as he breathed—and so got them, in return, as a matter of course.

"I'm satisfied to stick where I am," Malcolm had told an emissary from a rival firm who had sounded him out two years before. "J. P. is a prince from any angle you approach him. If a man falls down on the job he'll give him every chance in the world to get on his feet again."

"Oh, if a man is in the habit of falling down I suppose that's comforting," the other had jeered. "But our idea was 'that you—'"

"And," Malcolm had gone on calmly, "if a man is traveling like a ball of fire, J. P. will certainly see that the track is kept clear for him. I call that a combination hard to beat. And—I'll match you for the lunch."

Whether J. P. ever heard of the incident Malcolm did not know. But only a month later J. P. had certainly cleared the track for him, giving him charge of the Boston office at eighty-five hundred a year, when Cox was lifted from it to return to New York as a member of the firm.

"At anywhere from twenty to thirty thousand a year," Malcolm had estimated, moved by something more than idle curiosity.

From Boston back to New York as a member of the firm himself was his own next move, logically enough. He never doubted that he would make it in due season, if not sooner. The Boston office had, during the first two years he was in charge of it, broken all its records. This year would not be so good, probably, but that was understandable.

So, though the figures Cecily handed J. P. did not satisfy Malcolm, neither was he greatly perturbed. Instead, while J. P. looked over the papers, he looked over Cecily.

At that stage his interest was purely academic. Nature had obviously equipped her with a definite allure, yet she was not by any means the prettiest girl he had ever seen, nor did his heart—the reputed seismograph of certain emotions—register any disturbance. As a matter of fact he could have named offhand a half-dozen contemporaries of her sex who were as well endowed

with charm as she and against whom he had proved adequately insulated.

Which same, as he had candidly assured a young Boston matron who had probed him on the subject, he intended to remain.

"You're spoiled—like all successful young bachelors nowadays," she had mourned. "You want to spend all you make on yourself."

"Think of the years I've waited before I got the chance to," he had suggested. "I've had to work like the devil for what little I've got, truly. I didn't play bridge three times a year up to last year and I never had a golf-club in my hand until I came to Boston."

"You don't seem to lack diversion now, I must say!" she had commented.

"I feel I've earned the right to some," he had retorted. "But I don't feel I've reached the point where I can afford an out-and-out luxury like a wife. They come high these days—what a woman doesn't want doesn't exist!"

"I suppose you think you're immune," she had said scornfully. "But one of these days you'll fall in love good and hard and—"

"Have the good luck to be rejected, let's hope," he had suggested, with another grin.

It did not occur to him, however, this Thursday morning in J. P.'s office, that he was to have the good luck to be rejected by Cecily. Eye-filling, but—

Then suddenly her eyes met his. Briefly, yet with a quality in their cool depths that startled him. Almost as if somebody, having once said something to his discredit, had pointed him out and said: "There he is—what do you think of him?"

The next instant she was gone and J. P. was demanding his attention. As always, J. P. was perfectly reasonable.

"As you say, conditions are unfavorable," he had commented as they finished. Then, as both rose, he had added with his swift, cordial smile: "But there has always been one thing particularly true of you, Malcolm. And that is that unfavorable conditions have always been a challenge to you—something to ride over and not to be used as an explanation."

Now that, from J. P., might have merited second thought. But Malcolm had been almost immediately caught on the incoming tide of the class dinner.

In other years he had been hard put to find time for such affairs. And even this year it had been his intention to catch the midnight back to Boston after the dinner was over. To that, however, Ted Saunders, the most affluent of his classmates, had suggested an amendment and over-ridden all his objections.

"Who in Tophet ever heard of an advertising man working for a living?" Ted had demanded. "I'm telling you now and here that when this shindig is over a small, select and hand-picked house-party of nineteen-fifteen's best are to be transported to Great Neck. You're in—try to get out before Monday!"

In the end Malcolm had found himself, with not too much persuasion, committed. Why not? Business was rotten anyway.

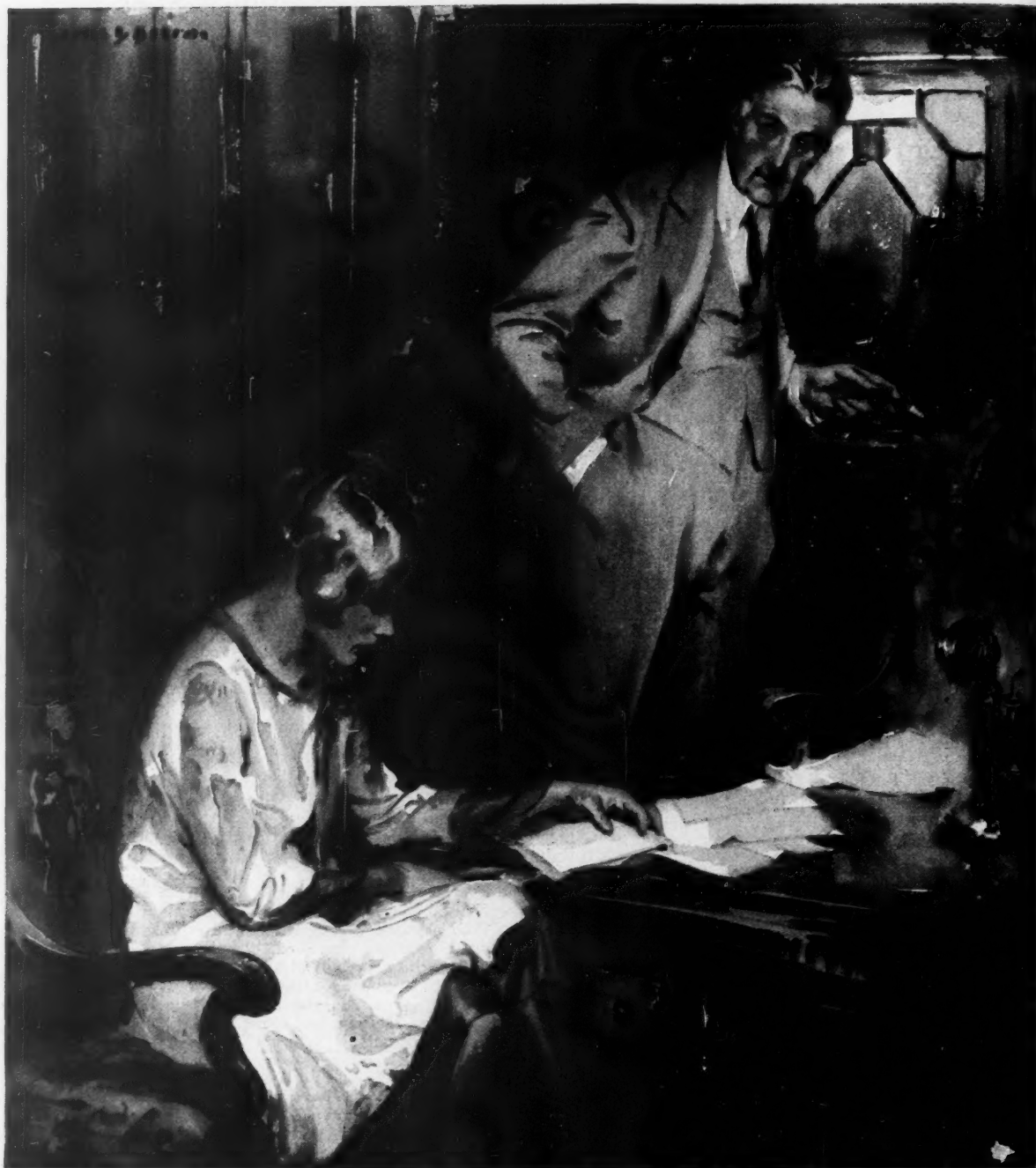
Now Long Island house-parties are apt to be gay and the particular one Ted Saunders had arranged was out for records. A good deal that passed for wit and much more that passed for pleasurable excitement would certainly have been eyed askance by those gentlemen who button their collars to the south. They, however, had not been invited.

Instead, Ted's wife had provided notable feminine attractions. She was still young, pretty and gay enough to stand the competition in charm. And charming the feminine concomitants were. The sort of girls any attractive young bachelor making a mere eighty-five hundred a year might have a very good time with, so long as he kept his fingers crossed. Expensive girls, all of them. Hot-house stuff, as far beyond the purse of a comparatively poor man as a racing schooner would be.

"But," as Malcolm audaciously informed one of them, who had henna hair and see-if-you-can-shock-me eyes, "although I can't afford any of you, I do get quite a kick out of what your sex would refer to as window shopping."

No one could doubt that. Or indeed that Cecily, having passed out of the picture, might have remained so forever as far as he was concerned, had she not insouciantly reentered it, just before dinner time Saturday. In a wisp of a frock that matched her eyes and was definitely fashioned to affect masculine vision.

"We've already met—though we've never been introduced," Cecily, superbly self-assured, informed their hostess as Malcolm was presented. "Mr. Ritchie is a feudal baron, you see—ruler of a distant province in that little Babylon in which I am a mere Christian slave."



C "I'm afraid it's my fault," Cecily said to J. P. "I—Mr. Ritchie proposed to me. I—refused him."

"But now," retorted Malcolm, recovering from his first surprise, "our positions are quite reversed."

He realized at once that she belonged. Which was the way the world now wagged. Economic independence for women is, like Allah, great these days; Cecily was its loyal prophet. Having overridden her father's objections and pooh-poohed her mother's protests, she followed, eight hours a day, the established ritual: a perfect example of what the successful young private secretary should wear, think and do.

Nevertheless, not having taken vows, she wasn't averse to sandwiching in a perfectly good house-party between Saturday and Monday when the chance came.

And, at a house-party, she came prepared to act as house-partyers do.

This being that kind of party, she and Malcolm got away to a swift start. They had not finished with the fish course before he felt privileged to put into words that which had shot into his mind again at the sight of her.

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"I am not unduly sensitive," he elaborated, grinning charmingly, "but you certainly seemed to be looking me over as if I were a social error of some sort."

"I haven't the slightest idea what you are talking about," she replied.

But she lied. She had known who he was and quite a lot about him as well. J. P. was like so many other executives who have the deplorable habit of thinking aloud in the presence of their private secretaries, in a way that would startle them if type-written transcripts of their comments were set before them.

"You almost convince me that I was mistaken," Malcolm persisted gaily.

"Is this some new sort of a line?" she demanded, her eyes as innocent as a child's.

"Heaven forbid!" he retorted. "I was quite mistaken. You never even glanced at me."

"Oh, I glanced," she admitted candidly. "Why shouldn't I? I hope to be successful some day myself. As a creator of

campaigns, I mean, not just somebody's stenog—and so I study successful men when'er I can."

"I don't believe it," Malcolm assured her, "but I'll call your bluff by giving you all the chance in the world to study *this* man."

To which, certainly, Cecily offered no objections. Yet up to the moment when, come Sunday night, he proposed, Malcolm had had no idea of what was happening to him. He and Cecily were on the terrace when—well, perhaps two cocktails had something to do with it. Or it may have been the night. A May night, with its inescapable ache and urge, its nebulous restlessness and poignant illusions.

Anyway, he glanced down at her and—events moved swiftly. So swiftly that Cecily was taken by surprise.

"Good gracious!" was the first wholly inadequate comment her violated lips could command.

But after she got going, she did not lack for words. She made it very clear that she had had no desire to be kissed, even though the act, as he promptly made plain, was a mere preliminary to an offer of marriage. Perhaps she felt he should be punished for getting the sequence mixed; anyway she said things that she afterwards regretted. As well she might. In the literature neither of etiquette nor of romance can be found precedents for what she said.

It was as if Juliet, looking down from her balcony and perceiving Romeo, had furiously requested him to explain how he got that way. And when, stunned, he had tried to explain, she had squelched him by assuring him that although she was much uplifted by his testimonials to her charm and desirability, she could not see why he, from an economic standpoint, would make her a good husband—and what made him think he could afford a wife anyway?

IT WAS that final slam that Malcolm could not comprehend and that even eclipsed other emotions natural to a rejected lover. Eighty-five hundred a year might not seem much to her, but for a man of his age, who had started at thirty a week, it represented real achievement. What was more, it was only a beginning. As the years passed—

There he found himself checked. Two years had passed without an increase. He had never asked for one—not from J. P. "That," had always been his philosophy, "is one thing that you can safely leave to J. P. He'll always pay the market price—and a little more."

Abruptly a swift suspicion fastened its fangs upon him. Cecily was J. P.'s secretary. Did that mean that—

"I guess," Malcolm announced to the May night, with great grimness, "that J. P. and I are due for a show-down. If he has any idea I'm losing my grip—"

Well, in that case Randolph, Reynolds and Cox could have his resignation and be hanged to them!

A decision to be slept on, certainly, as Malcolm for a few minutes now and then did. The morning, however, found him more determined than ever as, with studied but freezing courtesy, he asked if he might see J. P.

"I'll see," Cecily had replied, with a courtesy that matched his in clipped brevity and temperature.

Nevertheless, she wasn't quite as self-assured as she appeared. He took altogether too much for granted and he deserved all he got, she had defended herself to herself the night before, but she knew just the same she had said more than either politeness or—worse still—policy would condone.

Malcolm was in J. P.'s office less than ten minutes. Emerging, he passed through the outer office with never a glance to right or left.

"Oh, mi-gosh!" thought Cecily dismally.

It was almost noon before J. P. summoned her for the usual routine of dictation. "A memorandum for the heads of all departments," he announced as soon as she was seated, and began: "Mr. Malcolm Ritchie having resigned as chief of the Boston office, his resignation to take effect immediately, Mr. Stanley Hall has been placed in charge."

This Cecily transcribed, as conscience-stricken as she deserved to be. Finished, she glanced up at J. P. He sat, his vision turned inward, his face set in lines of concern.

"I wouldn't have had this happen for anything," he announced, rising abruptly. "I have a feeling, somehow, that it's my fault but—I'll be horsewhipped if I can see how!"

Cecily knew he was not saying this to her. He merely felt the need of vocal outlet. And yet: "I'm—I'm afraid it's my fault," she heard herself announce.

J. P. turned.

"What?" he gasped incredulously.

They say girls don't blush nowadays. If that is so, Cecily achieved a notable revival of a lost art.

"I—he proposed to me last night," she explained, before second thought could suggest that such information does not commonly constitute itself part of a private secretary's duties.

"Do you mean to say you're engaged to him?" demanded J. P. "Good Lord—why didn't the man say so, instead of coming in with a demand for ten thousand a year that sounded like a club being brandished over my head? I'd—"

"But—I'm not engaged," protested Cecily. "I—refused him."

J. P. sat down. "There seems," he said, "to be something in your mind that you believe explains what happened this morning, but I can't seem to get it. You say he proposed and—why didn't you tell me before that you knew him?"

"We only met each other Saturday night—at a house-party," Cecily explained. "But in some way he—well, he—" There she stopped to blush anew.

J. P. smiled humanly. "I think I can take his reactions for granted," he said. "What happened then—if you feel you can tell me?"

"I think I—ought to. He—well, he seemed to think all he had to do was to reach out and take me and that made me—angry. And—certain things popped out before I realized it."

"Just what do you mean by certain things?" demanded J. P. still puzzled.

Cecily hesitated. Then, because J. P. was J. P., she plunged. "Things I had no right to say—based on little things you have said about him of late."

"Things I have said—what have I said about him?" demanded J. P., his face a picture of honest bewilderment.

"Why—just that you felt he had been standing still ever since you sent him to Boston. You—you spoke of the way he used to work overtime, and the business books and papers he used to read so religiously, and the idea file that he kept up so that it was the envy of all the office. You said you were afraid he was slackening up all along the line."

"My word—I must talk a lot without realizing it!" commented J. P. ruefully. And added quickly, "You didn't repeat any of this as coming from me, of course?"

"Oh, of course not!" she replied. "What I said was that with so many things to divert his attention from business I didn't see how—he felt he could add a wife to them at this moment."

"Well—I think that's true," commented J. P. He paused, drummed on his desk thoughtfully for a second, then: "I must cure myself of the habit of thinking aloud," he remarked dryly, "but while we're on the subject I'll say this. Up to the time I sent him up to Boston, Malcolm seemed headed for a place in the firm. After that he began, I suspect, to cultivate a lot of outside interests. A man should, in reason—but not in a way that establishes a definite dead-line so far as his business progress is concerned. Malcolm did. That's all—except I sincerely hope he'll manage to land elsewhere."

That startled Cecily. She wondered why J. P. should doubt it. Surely anyone as young, as clever and—well, as attractive as she knew Malcolm to be, in spite of all she had said to him, shouldn't have any difficulty in landing elsewhere.

But, within an hour, she caught a glimpse of what J. P. had foreseen.

THAT Mr. Ritchie who used to work for your firm was in to see my boss this morning," the private secretary to the executive of the firm that had sounded Malcolm out two years before told Cecily at luncheon that noon. They sometimes met so, and talked casual shop across the table.

"Really?" asked Cecily cautiously. From now on she was going to be an absolute sphinx!

"He's sort of cute, don't you think?" demanded the other. "Gosh—I wish A. L. would hire a few like him."

"Isn't— isn't he going to work for your firm?" asked Cecily.

"No—A. L. wasn't interested," the other replied. "I guess that gave him an awful shock, too, because our firm tried to get him away from yours some time ago."

"But if they wanted him then, why not now?" asked Cecily, surprised at both bits of news.

"Oh, A. L. told me himself afterwards that your boss was probably just waiting a chance to slip the skids under him and that if he wasn't worth ten thou' a year to your firm he guessed he didn't want him at that price—or any other. I guess there's nothing like holding onto the job you've got no matter who you are, until you land another." She paused, to glance wonderingly at Cecily. "Say," she (Continued on page 198)

One of the Five Million

"I DISREMEMBER your name, but there's something I'd like to ast you,"

Gertie said timidly.

The old woman—she was gray all over, hair, skin, sodden garments, as gray as her gray bucket of gray suds, and the steamy, hot, gray July day that was blazing over the city above—sat back on her heels and looked up in surprise. The girls at the Palais Royal Department Store rarely spoke to her.

"You wouldn't have to know my name to speak to me, dear'ry," she said after a glance about the deserted cloak-room, to make sure that no one else was addressed. "It's Cahill."

"Is that an Irish name?" Gertie asked.

The lead-colored old face broke into the million wrinkles that made a smile.

"You'd not find the bet of it for Irish in this city, no, nor in anny other, nayther," Mrs. Cahill assured her.

"I am. My name's Gertrude Cassidy."

Mrs. Cahill cocked her little head, considering this. "There's Cassidys in Mayo, an' very well-to-do, too," she mused.

"If they're well-to-do, they ain't us," Gertie stated firmly.

"My father was Joe Cassidy, a ship painter," she resumed. "He fell off a plank three weeks before I was born."

"Posthumous?" Mrs. Cahill said seriously, with a cluck of pity.

"I guess so. Mama—" Gertie went on, and stopped short. "Mama's only dead a year," she said, blinking back tears.

"God rest her an' all here!" Mrs. Cahill responded automatically. "Do you live wit' your folks, dear'r?" she added, after a few damp gray wipes at the lineoleum.

"No, ma'am. I haven't got nobody. I live with the Rinn's."

"The Clement Rinn's, over in Tent?"

"No, ma'am. His name is Leo. He works on a boat."

"There's lots of Rinn's," Mrs. Cahill observed thoughtfully.

Gertie waited. She was ashamed of the thoughts that arose in her. She was thinking that it would be a terrible thing to



be old, like this gray old woman, dressed in mud-colored rags, with burlap pinned about one's skirts, and nothing better to do than clean the dressing-rooms of Palley's on a hot Saturday afternoon.

The loneliness of age like that—the uselessness—the little hall bedroom, the empty holidays!

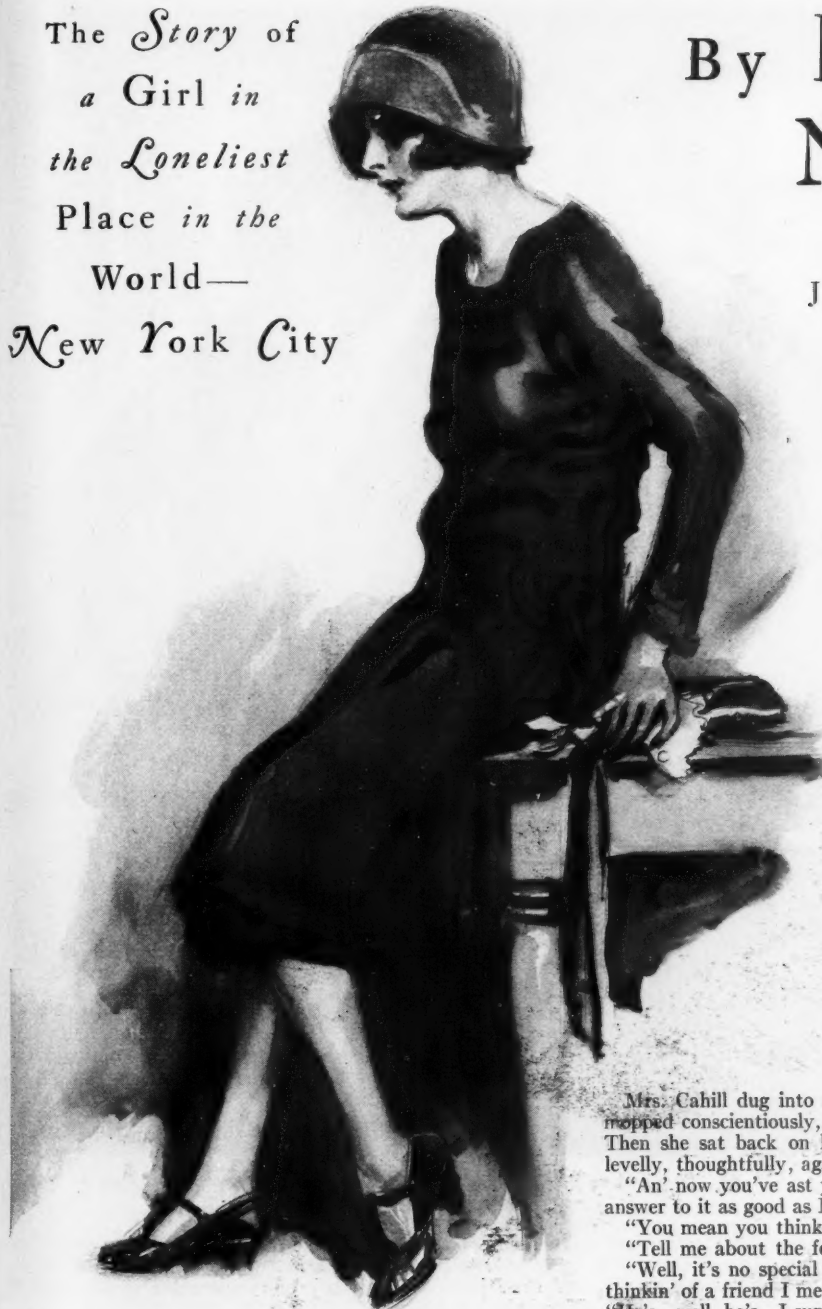
Mrs. Cahill, mopping and wringing, with lean little agile hands, was also ruminating. She studied the weary, shabby, gentle little girl who was sitting on the table edge, the innocent eyes, the red bobbed hair, the unformed, sad young mouth, and deep in her soul she said:

"There's one wit' a good little pure face on her, like as if it might be meself comin' barefoot off the ship again! What'll come to her? If she gets a good man it'll mean a raft of childer' pullin' her down, an' rent to pay every four weeks of the wor'ld, an' if she gets a bad one he'll break the hear't out of her, an' go on his way drinkin' an' smokin'. Maybe there's other kinds, but I never seen thim. She's yet to bear her first, an' lose her first—the creature.

The Story of
a Girl in
the Loneliest
Place in the
World—
New York City

By Kathleen
Norris

Illustrations by
James Montgomery Flagg



"He says he'd like to come have dinner an' meet my folks," Gertie said. "But ye have no folks?" Mrs. Cahill asked.

It's very har'rd to feel the little fingers of thim hot about your own fingers, an' have to leave thim go back to God. She's got that all ahead. An' I've me health an' me job, an' me three little rooms furnished very good, an' I thank God for it!"

Many of Palley's girls were smart young things, bobbed, rouged, silken of hose, sophisticated of eye. But this one was a little different; her mourning was shabby, her eye gentle. Mrs. Cahill's heart was drawn to her.

"What did you want to ast me, dear'r?" she said.

Gertie colored, laughed in happy embarrassment.

"Here's how it is," she began. "When mama was livin' we had rooms in Amsterdam, do you see?"

The older woman was under no misapprehension regarding Holland. She instantly visualized instead the teeming thoroughfare along New York's western boundary, the carts on the curbing, the narrow glittering shops, the narrower tenements above the shops.

She nodded.

"But now," pursued Gertie, "all I have is a room at the Rinns'. An' while he's away on his ship, she's gone down with the baby to her mother, at Centre Moriches. So you see I'm alone in the flat. An' if I should want someone to call on me," Gertie went on, hesitating a little as she came to the difficult part, "or they would want to call on me—should I leave them do it?"

"Leave a man come see you, an' you alone in the flat?"

"Yes'm," Gertie answered, looking at her with all a little girl's docile expectancy. "Mama would never leave even the instalment men come in whilst I'd be alone there," she added.

"You had a very good mama," opined Mrs. Cahill, with a sigh.

"Yes'm, she was a saint," Gertie said simply. "But of course," the girl went on, after a pause, "I'm twenty now, an' I'm head of the stock-room, an' she'd be the last would want me to be an old maid all me days!"

"The ger'rls is very little troubled wit' that, these times!" Mrs. Cahill said darkly.

"I hat to ast somebody this," Gertie presently said, returning to her problem, "an' I couldn't ast Mrs. White; she'd be very short with me."

Mrs. Cahill dug into a grimy corner with an old case-knife, mopped conscientiously, wrung out her dreadful old floor-cloth. Then she sat back on her heels and studied Gertie seriously, levelly, thoughtfully, again.

"An' now you've ast yure question, sure don't you know the answer to it as good as I do meself?" she said, smiling.

"You mean you think I oughtenter?" Gertie asked, drooping.

"Tell me about the feller," Mrs. Cahill temporized.

"Well, it's no special one," Gertie began. "At least—I was thinkin' of a friend I met some weeks back—" she floundered.

"He's—well, he's—I suppose I was specially thinkin' of a young man that lives in Philadelphia," she resumed, "an' that would come up maybe some time an' spend a Sunday evenin' with me."

"Where'd you meet him, dear'r?" Mrs. Cahill asked, puckering her already puckered little face as she pondered the matter.

"He come up to me in the street—he'd picked up a letter I threw away, an' he said maybe did I drop it by mistake," Gertie explained. "So then we talked, an' he took me to have a soda, an' he ast could he come in some day an' meet my folks, an' I told him I didn't have any, exceptin' it'd be my grandma, who lived over in Jersey."

"Has yure grandma met 'm?" Mrs. Cahill asked practically.

"No, ma'am, I haven't got any grandma," Gertie explained with simplicity.

"But you tole him you had?"

"Yes'm, becuz," further elucidated Gertie, "his family is very well fixed in Philadelphia. An' I didn't want him to think I hat nobody belongin' to me in the wor'ld," the girl went on, with a wistful note, "becuz of his own family bein' so grand."

"What's his name?" Mrs. Cahill, now storing her cleaning implements in an under-stairs closet, asked practically.

"Reynolds. George Reynolds," Gertie answered, glad to say the magic syllables, encouraged by the other woman's interest.

"Do you know anny-one that knows him?"

"No, ma'am, becuz he lives in Philadelphia."

"An' he's comin' up tomorra?"

"Yes, ma'am. An' he says he'd like to come have dinner with me an' meet my folks," Gertie said, trembling and eager.

"But ye have no folks?" Mrs. Cahill asked, nodding.

"No, ma'am. I told him my grandma lived in Jersey, an' that she was about eighty years of age, so that she was very aged," explained Gertie, "an' I says that as soon as I could I'd ast her to come over an' have dinner with me."

"Well, while you was about it, you said more'n your prayers, didn't you?" Mrs. Cahill commented dispassionately. "An' you thought I might play I was your grandma, did you?" she asked.

"I thought—someone—might," faltered Gertie. "Jest to have someone settin' there—it would look like somebody cared whether I lived or died—"

The pathetic syllables lingered on the air while Mrs. Cahill unpinned the burlap that had protected her garments, permitting her decent serge skirt to descend to its decorous length, her faded old eye, oyster-gray and shrewd and wise, resting upon Gertie meanwhile.

"I thought I'd get some pickles an' a ring at the delicatessen," pursued Gertie, "an' maybe a chicken at the rotiss'rie."

"Between us an' all har'rm!" Mrs. Cahill commented.

"You couldn't—I s'pose you couldn't come over tomorra?" the girl persisted, with a rabbit's sudden rush of daring.

"Tomorra," pronounced Mrs. Cahill, her dignity now reinforced by the assumption of a dingy black bonnet trailing a rusty tail of crape, "tomorra' is me day of rist."

Gertie drooped. She had supposed herself rather stooping, rather condescending, in enlisting the sympathies of this old charwoman at all. It was disconcerting to discover her a person with engagements and interests and a life of her own.

"I has two grandsons," Mrs. Cahill explained, now wending her way through hot, clean, subterranean passages to the broiling street above, and locking and unlocking doors as she went, "an' the older one, Raymond, have a wife an' a young son of his own. Ray merrid a school-teacher an' he wor'ks in Throy, but doesn't he come down upon me almost ivery Sunda' that's in it an' have dinner wit' me? An' Harry, the young one, that's got the red hair, is doin' very good in Jama'ca. An' manny's the time he'll come up on Sunda' too, so's that I'd always have a chicken or the like of that handy, that I'd fry thim a taste of dinner did they come in on me, d'ye see?"

Gertie, disconsolate, could not but see.

"I go to High ivery Sunda' of the wor'ld," Mrs. Cahill pursued, "an' fir'st I has me little bat', unless there does be hot wather Saturda' night—but faith, there's never that! I clean me



"There's forty men settin' out on them stoops," Mrs. Cahill remarked. Gertie

little house, or maybe I'd make the boys a cake—tomorra' I've to go over to the big hospital, there's a poor ger'rl there dyin', an' she'll leave a young boy of twelve alone in the wor'ld, God help the creature."

"I'm alone in the world, too," Gertie observed, as the other woman's somewhat hesitant, somewhat apologetic voice paused.

They were in the street now, the hot, crowded street of a mid-summer half-holiday. Monday would be July Fourth; the markets and fruit stalls were crowded with housekeepers who had three days' provisions to buy.

"Well," Mrs. Cahill observed dryly, in answer to the girl's last remark, "as long as you're alone, you'll keep your soul an' your figure, as the old sayin' has it!"

This bit of Old-World philosophy failed to comfort Gertie, and she stared at the hot, unfriendly street with tear-dazzled eyes.

"Where do you live, dear'r?" the older woman asked, perplexed by the other's obvious inability to manage the affair.

"In Fifty-sixt'," Gertie responded, brightening. "Up-town side, the first house from the corner, on the ground floor!"

"That'd be back of Kennedy's, thin?"

"It used to be Kennedy's. But there's a bank there now."

"I know it well. It's only a matt er of five or six blocks from where I am meself," Mrs. Cahill mused. "But I wouldn't let a man come to see me if I was there all alone, dear'ry," she added. "Your mama wouldn't like it. You have a very great yout'



whimpered in bewilderment and fear. Suddenly, with an oath, Reynolds was gone.

on you still, an' he'd think very light of you. He'd say 'That one has no mama or papa she'd be said by; sure, there's no control over what she'd do!'

"I know," Gertie agreed wretchedly. "But he has a way with him—that one!" she admitted, suddenly dimpling. "He'll say to me, very direct an' firm, 'Gertrude, I'm coming up Sunda', an' you have your grandma at the house, an' we'll have a little taste of dinner together,' he'll say, an' the more I'll tell him that maybe I can't get hold of my grandma, and that the Rinns is away, the more he'll josh me. 'You manage that,' he'll say, and 'I've got to see you Sunda', he'll say."

"Well, you'd best wire him a tillygram an' tell him next week," Mrs. Cahill, turning into her own congested thoroughfare, said regretfully in farewell.

Gertie stood still, unwilling to lose even this companionship. There was a long, lonely space ahead of her if she wired George not to come. This afternoon, tonight, all day tomorrow and tomorrow night, all day Monday and Monday night, without anyone to talk to, until she reached the store on Tuesday morning. The Renns, with whom she lived, wouldn't be back until September, and in her mother's lifetime Gertie had lived in Albany; such friends as the family possessed were far away.

She watched Mrs. Cahill's narrow little bowed shoulders and dangling widow's veil out of sight, then turned irresolutely and walked slowly up Eighth Avenue. Strange how lonely, how idle and superfluous one might feel in this biggest of the cities! If

only there was someone to visit—something to do—dishes to wash—plans to make.

Gertrude Cassidy passed the telegraph office without so much as a sidelong glance; the cool blue and white of its shaded interior made upon her no impression at all.

But at the rotisserie window she stopped and watched the innocent-looking little creamy white broilers being toasted and speared and sizzled mercilessly before the relentless flames.

And after a few moments she slowly went in.

Mrs. Cahill's three-room apartment was at the top of four long flights of stairs, so she had to be careful, in grocery and market, to remember what supplies she wanted. To have to descend a second time to the street was a calamity.

Usually Mrs. Kinseeling would run an errand for her; delighted to escape for fifteen minutes to all the excitements of the street, leaving her three babies in Mrs. Cahill's care.

But Mrs. Kinseeling, who was almost twenty-seven, was expecting her fourth baby at any minute now and could no longer be depended upon for this neighborly service. On the contrary, Mrs. Cahill must stand ready to help Mrs. Kinseeling. And today the old woman panted up-stairs in the insufferable heat with several purchases for her neighbor added to her own.

"I seen you was all but out of bakin'-powther, Mollie," said Mrs. Cahill when Mrs. Kinseeling, pale and patient, with the old baby balanced on her slender, twisted hip, came across the hall for a visit.

"You look kilt wit' the heat, Mrs. Cahill dear'r," observed Mollie Kinseeling, sitting down at the kitchen table and planting young Mart firmly upon it, with the blue china top of the sugar bowl as a toy.

"An' I got you some oatmeal, too," Mrs. Cahill, who had taken off her bonnet, loosened her high hooked collar and stepped out of her shoes, went on.

"I thank you kindly. I was thinkin' I couldn't give Big Mart yeast powder biscuit," Mollie said appreciatively, opening the flat purse she always carried with her, to settle her debt. "They've all been wild as Ay-rabs today," she said wearily, of her children. "I don't know what gets into them!" She kissed the baby's fat hand. "I'd pitch the crowd of them out the windy f'r tin cints!" she observed.

Potatoes, pork, a frying chicken cut into wet pieces, yeast, pepper, buns, canned milk, tomatoes, onions and a wooden saucer of butter—it had been a heavy armful, the big cardboard box of groceries and meat. "Eight spuds for a quarther—they'll be a quarther apiece nixt!" Mrs. Cahill remarked, without venom.

"You wouldn't put it past them," Mrs. Kinseeling agreed. "The boys'll be comin' in tomorra?" she inferred, eying the preparations that were going forward on the kitchen table, with all a housekeeper's interest.

"They are if they can make it. But I'll be ready for them anyways," Mrs. Cahill, perspiring freely, panted in reply. "Ray'll be down, I wouldn't wondher, wit' Lizzie an' the young baby, an' then they'll go over to her auntie in Brooklyn to sleep the night. An' Harry'll often come in on me—unbeknownst."

"Lizzie can have it easy now, whin she's got but the one." Mrs. Kinseeling said, with a sort of (Continued on page 158)



Jean Kenyon Mackenzie,
Author of "African Adventures."

I HAVE a job that takes me into the jungle; it is the job of missionary. I was thirty years old when first I went to Africa, and I was cold to the prospect, for duty rather than any anticipation of pleasure had moved me to go. That was twenty years ago, and I know now that I have had more happiness in this work than I could have had in any other I might have chosen.

From the first I felt as though the forest were my element. I felt shy of the forest people, but I did not fear them; there is nothing menacing in the attitude of the primitive African toward a friendly stranger. Then I learned their language, and my shyness passed. My days were busy and eventful and full of the color of primitive customs and strange happenings. Like the day I shall tell you about.

I wake remembering that it is Saturday. White people have names for the days; hitherto the days in the forest have been without names. Being the white woman in the Mission clearing, I know where I am; our forest settlement is three degrees north of the equator, and in the Southern Cameroon, West Africa. There are four white people in the Bene forest as wise as this.

Often the black people ask me how came my father to let me wander so far from his home town. How many nights did I sleep on the way? Many times in answer I have added the sum of the ten days in the white man's great canoe from the American beach to the French beach, and the twenty-four days in the French canoe along the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast and the Slave Coast to the coast of the Cameroon, and ten days of forest trail to the Mission clearing of

My Life

By Jean
Who Lived in

Metet. We count over the rivers to be crossed by the way, but I say nothing of the five thousand miles, for a mile is a thing of the white man. Like a clock, like the mail.

All the mail is for the white people. Once in a moon they get a mail; a carrier brings it on his back as if it were a load of rubber or ebony or ivory, but it is not like these—it is a thing of the white man and can make him laugh and cry.

Now a drum is a thing of the black man. A white man writes a letter and a black man beats a drum—with two sticks and a hollowed log he beats a tattoo that is a signal, and he has a code of signals that are as many as the adventures and the misadventures of man. Down on the floor of the forest where the trail runs in the shadow the carrier plods with the mail, but

the black man's news, leaping out of the drum, runs on every wave of the ether above the roof of the forest.

And on this Saturday morning, very early, a drum from a village down in the forest announces a death. That staccato message clicking like a telegram climbs the morning air.

"Ba ba mo loé!" says the drum. Almost it seems to speak, under the sticks of the drummer, an articulate Bulu phrase. I hear it where I lie in my bed and I know that the drum has said: "Cross, cross his hands on his breast!" Smitten out of sleep by the stroke of the old code phrase, I believe it—someone surely, I think, is dead, and I listen while another drum, faint and far away like the crowing of a cock, repeats the proclamation. And then another, and another, and all the drums from near and far, struck by all the drummers who have risen in the dawn to spread the news, give tongue. You would wonder, listening to that clamor, how a hollowed log with a slit along the



The arrival of dinner.

length of it could so approximate, and so magnify, the voice of man.

In Africa the news is at least debatable, and yet so loud a crying from rim to rim of the horizon and beyond is convincing. I wonder who is dead. Presently I hear a sound of wailing from the schoolgirls' quarters—some of my children are bereaved.

in Darkest Africa

Kenyon Mackenzie

the Midst of the African Tribes

They come up the path to my cabin, a troop of young brown bodies. One and all they wear a belt of beads about the middle, a green leaf apron and a bustle of dyed grass. They are mourning. Their hands are clasped on their heads; their eyes are closed or seem to be; their chins are lifted; tears fall from their faces to wet their childish chests. Some wail loudly and some make a whispering and plaintive wail that strikes me, I must say, to the heart.

Their solicitous friends, who are entirely grave, press their noses to the wire of my screen door. They retail the news. Ondo'o of Mbita Mbana is dead; that was his drum name linked to the death call. Had I not heard the drums saying: "If you meet a man on the path perhaps he is your wife's sweetheart! Perhaps he is your wife's sweetheart!" Every man has a code name to be beaten on the drum, and this is the name of Ondo'o. It is a flattering name and suggests a career of successful clandestine adventure.

Half the little girls at my door are related, it seems, to this African Don Juan. Some are his sisters or half-sisters—by one father, as we say among the Bulu; some are his little wives; one is his daughter. Others

have discovered manufactured temporary kinship to the dead man—if he is dead—and join their pleas with the pleas of the mourners, who beg to go to the mourning. I disentangle the true kin of Ondo'o from the bogus kin—the former must of course go to the mourning.

These truly stricken little girls move away in correct formation, the nearest of kin going first, her hands on her head, her tears on her chest, her eyes closed and herself entirely preoccupied by grief. It would be the most clumsy of improprieties to address her. After this herd of damsels I call out my admonitions, begging them not to grieve too deeply till they know that Ondo'o is indeed dead. At this heartless injunction the wails of my little girls exceed. This augmented voice of sorrow fills the intervals of drumming until it is lost on a forest trail.

For breakfast George Schwab and I have coffee and waffles and an adequate number of avocado pears. The sun is up, it is Saturday, and already we feel very busy. We are only two, who should be four; Gayle Beanland is off to the north chiding his friends the Yebekolo; Jewel Schwab is off to the east visiting her friends the Makae. The forest has (Continued on page 118)



Ⓐ Above: The call drum, which corresponds to the radio as a distributor of the jungle news.
Ⓑ Below: A village school. There are about 25,000 children in school in Southern Cameroon.



In the big fire Mr. Youtsey's factory had been wiped away. That winter his office was a circus tent, under the painted smile of the Pearl of the Harem.

ON A dull and respectable street in a dull-looking house lived an American gentleman who followed a business which you and I would probably regard as being a very dull business indeed. In a large contracting and jobbing way he made composition stuffings for cushions and mattresses and pillows and so forth.

It wasn't a dull business to him, though. To him it was highly spectacular and replete with thrills. By studiously following it day in and day out and night-times as well—for he was one of those men who take the job home with them from the office—he made a noble fortune. When he closed out to the combine they gave him one million in cash and two millions in secured notes. He was fifty-two years old then. Only fifty-two, he was fond of saying just as most men who are only fifty-two are so fond of saying. And since one of the prime conditions of the deal was

By Irvin The Man Learned to

*A Plea
Lost Art of*

that he stay out of the line and not go setting up a competing shop somewhere, the prospects seemed bright for Titus D. Youtsey, in his hale and hearty middle age, to enjoy himself playing about.

His house, you might say, would make an admirable place to start from with the idea of playing about but a very poor place to stay in for the same purpose. You might broaden the application and say these things for the town where he lived. Its name was Hobbsville and, somehow or other, it had the look about it of being a town which by personal preference would if possible be named with just such a name as that. It was what is known as a residential community, meaning by that a town which largely is inhabited by families that have been there a long time and by the families of retired or semi-retired well-to-do farmers who moved in from the country so that their children might have better school advantages and also that they might spend their declining years in congenial combat against bond issues for street improvements and all such expensive hifaluting notions.

"What was good enough for our granddaddies is still good enough for us"; that, unofficially, was this town's motto. It was written in the rutted sidewalks, in the ill-paved alleys, in the annual epidemic of typhoid, in the prevalent architecture, which was Early Chester A. Arthur, in the sewage disposal plan, which was Late Moundbuilder.

Hobbsville did a considerable wholesale trade with the surrounding territory, which was prosperous but remote from any of the larger centers, and it mainly was ruled over by thriving conservative merchandisers who feared the Lord and hated the mail-order houses both with the same pious intensity. It had only one considerable manufacturing plant and that plant was the possession, until he sold it, of our presumptive hero. This factory worked four hundred hands and its pay-roll by thousands of dollars a week was the largest pay-roll anywhere around.

It seemed only fitting and proper that the founder and sole proprietor of this important industry should reside on Osmus Avenue, that being Hobbsville's principal street for private homes. If you were housed in certain less distinguished quarters you merely lived there, sometimes just barely did live there, but out on Osmus Avenue you resided, invariably. It was a

S. Cobb Who Play

For The
LOAFING

mile-long stretch without a foot of bend or an inch of rise in it, and lined on either side with large square-faced dwellings, each one staring dumbly across at its opposite neighbor like an old gossip which, having run out of things to say, has for that very good reason gone silent.

These houses largely trended to mansard roofs of slate superimposed on clapboarded walls and to heavy stone porches jutting out before painted brick back-grounds, thereby suggesting false teeth in the front jaws of elderly spinsters, and to boxlike cupolas of tin or planking. Really, the plural of cupola was Upper Osmus Avenue. Nearly every house had a good-sized yard, a neat rectangle in shape; and nearly every yard contained at least one circular bed where in summer elephant-ear plants grew and in fall cosmos and dahlias. Canna lilies, and for autumnal effect, those scarlet salvias which look at a distance like an outbreak of a malignant red rash on a gardenscape also were quite popular. It was hard to think of anyone on Osmus Avenue doing an original thing or uttering a strictly original remark and, as a matter of truth, it happened but rarely that a permanent resident there undertook so daring an experiment as either of these would have been.

In the largest house and the one having the largest lot about it abode Hobbsville's wealthiest citizen, the Mr. Youtsey already referred to as a leading candidate for the central figure of this narrative. He was a widower with two children, a son, Titus D. Junior, aged twenty-two, and a daughter, Estrella, aged twenty. The latter in a highly emery-wheeled state as to culture and manners, but lately had been given a final burnishing-off by one of the most expensive finishing schools in the East. What Estrella did not know about entering and leaving a drawing-room and the little theater movement in New York was not worth knowing, and no two ways about it. But although senior to his sister by nearly two years, Titus D. Junior, as is frequently the case with the males of our breed, had not acquired polish so rapidly as she had. He was at Yale, a rude and fuzzy undergraduate, specializing in the higher mathematics of what mileage could be got out of a low-hung roadster.

Both the children looked upon their father, the provider to their wants and the purveyor to their luxuries, as being



In Europe, Mr. Youtsey seemed persistently given to hunting for something which he never succeeded in finding.

*Illustrations by
W. D. Stevens*

old-fashioned, not to say old-fogyish. Beyond question they were right. He said "ain't" for "aren't" and wore cuffs that fastened to his wristbands with metal clips. Estrella called him a perfect mid-Victorian survival. As a matter of fact he was not so much Victorian as he was corn-beltian of the approximate period 1890-1910.

To tell you the truth, Mr. Youtsey had a third child, born before either young Titus or Estrella came into the world and in all likelihood destined to endure and flourish longer than those two would. Reference is made to the Youtsey Manufacturing Company. This was his real masterpiece, his most notable offspring. He was both its proud father and its adoring mother. He had, so to speak, raised it on the bottle from its mewling infancy, had given it its pap and had taught it to walk, thence had guided it along and through to that lusty maturity where

it was worth, in the wise opinions of the appraisers for the amalgamated brethren, three gratifying millions of our large hard dollars. When it was sick he sat up with it nights; when it was well again he patted it on the back and rejoiced in its strength. It was bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and every brick in its walls was like a hair of his head, every smudged window down its length like one of his own eye-teeth, and so giving it up was as parting with one dearly and eternally beloved.

Still, there were recompenses. Now he would have leisure to sit back and take his ease. Now he would have time to play. All his life Mr. Youtsey had in some vague and undefined fashion envied those of his acquaintances and those of the wide world at large who had time to play. Because all of his life, for almost as far back as he could remember, Mr. Youtsey had to work, or had felt that he had to, which amounts practically to the same thing. His days, from childhood, had been dedicated to labored service before the sooty altar-fires of the great She-God Git-up-and-Go-Do-It-You, who in addition to being a goddess is about the most exacting old dame of a taskmistress you ever ran into.

On the morning after the day when the final transfer papers were signed, sealed, delivered and exchanged, as a climax to months of negotiations and dickering, he rose as was his rule at six-thirty o'clock and breakfasted alone in his big ugly dining-room, and then by pure will power resisting an inclination to reach for his hat and start for the works, he settled back in an overstuffed chair and peered backward through the nwarroing vista of his own career. The chair was overstuffed with his own patent conglomerate, the Youtsey New Invention Feather-down Filling over which he had sweated for years before he perfected it.

For an hour he gratefully sat and took stock. From the beginning it had been toil, toil, toil, and nothing else but. At twelve he had left the grade school here in Hobbsville to help his hard-driven widowed mother shoo from a shabby door the wolf that kept coming back as regularly as rent day rolled around and showing its menacing fangs to her and her undernourished brood. He hadn't sold papers, hence was denied that usual boast of the average self-made success. But he had sold home-made pies and crullers, vending up one street and down another with a heavy basket on either arm. He had peddled past this very house where he now lived—no, resided.

At fifteen he was learning his trade in an upholsterer's shop; at twenty buying on credit and promises to pay a partner's share in the shop; at twenty-five starting on his own hook as a manufacturer upon a scale so small as to be microscopic—one journeyman, one apprentice, one odd-jobs boy and he, the boss, doing as much with his own hands day in and day out as all three of them put together, and by gaslight keeping the accounts or scouting for the domestic trade. Sunday had meant for him the day when he posted the books and brought the small volume of correspondence to even date. Energy was his post-office address, and hustle was his middle name and not putting it off till tomorrow was his favorite text from the Scriptures.

The business, on being so well-fostered, responded to treatment and it grew and grew. It had its downs when he nurtured it as though it were an ailing baby, and its ups while he got right in back of it with both shoulders and shoved. It outgrew its swaddling-clothes and went into breeches, to the accompaniment of a leased building instead of a partitioned-off wing of an old planing-mill, and twenty more hands on the salary list, making forty in all. Forty less than twenty years back, and four hundred yesterday—that had taken some doing and no mistake about it.

He couldn't remember a day when he himself had slackened off to let things run on their own steam. The bigger the development the heavier the demands for direction had been upon his competency; the more the orders the more numerous and perverse the loose ends to be gathered up in his willing managing fingers and plaited against raveling and waste.

There had been emergencies—fierce, terrific ones. Take the big lockout back in 1912 when, rather than meet the figures of the union which he thought unfair, he had fought single-handed

against odds—had fought on, operating half-time with untrained, untrustworthy helpers recruited from strike-breaking agencies in Chicago and Cleveland and with so-called private detectives—and a tough bunch of plug-uglies they were too—to protect his property from attack; had fought on and on, losing thousands a day until the losses mounted up to nearly a million and the banks threatened to call his loans; he won out, though.

That chapter had left other scars on him than the white V in his scalp where a well-aimed half brick nicked him one night coming out of the gates under guard to meet a profane mob of his old workers. But because he thought then he was right,



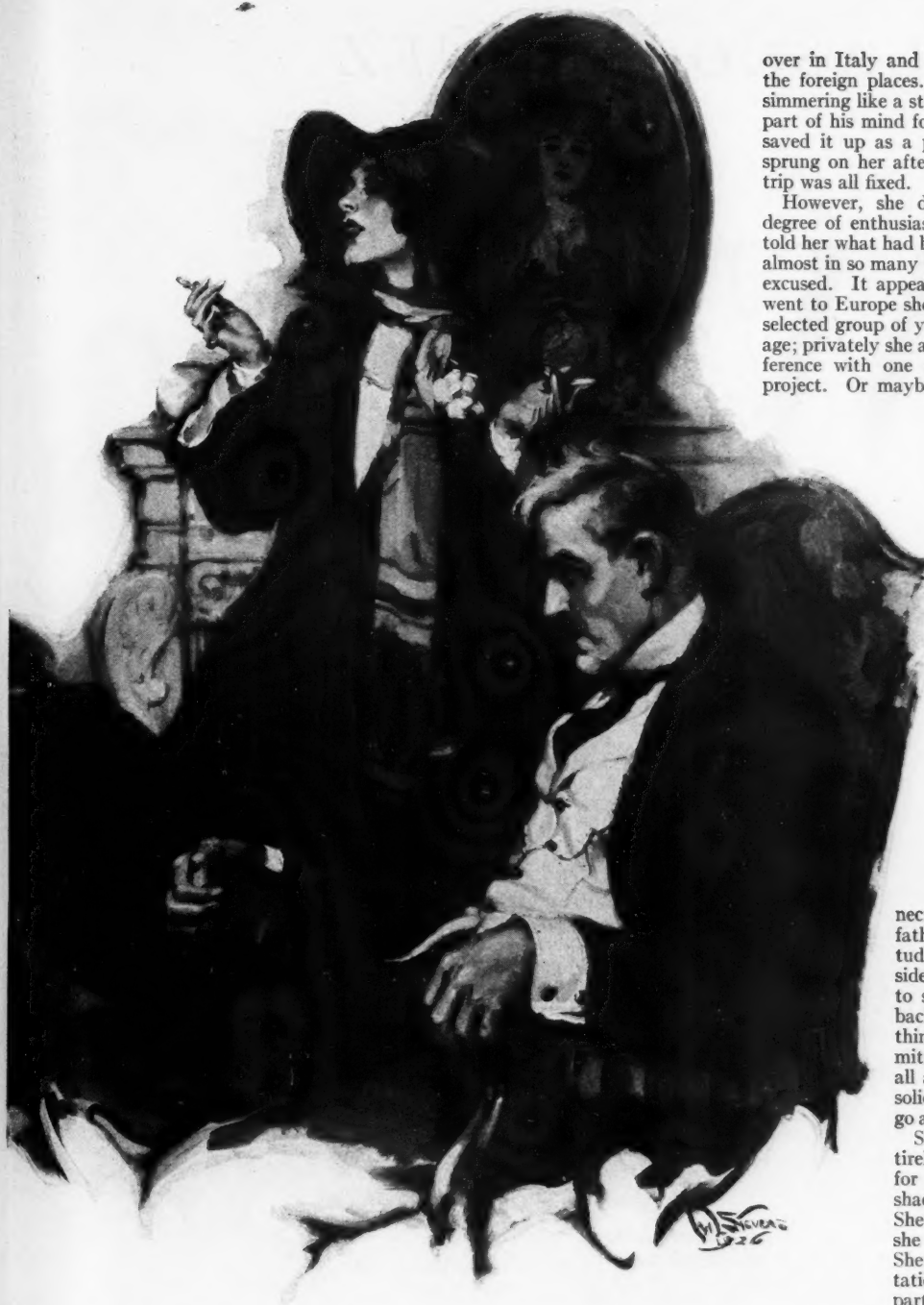
¶ To Mr. Youtsey his children, Estrella and Junior, were not his underlings; they were his superiors. He had made them so by coddling and pampering.

and thought so still, he'd made them listen to reason before he was done—and then on his own motion had increased the scale and cut down the hours and organized a bonus system for the division of surplus profits.

Then again, take the big fire in November of '17 after we'd gone into the war and the whole converted plant had been speeded up above normal capacity, turning out hospital equipment for the government; and then one windy night everything wiped away and Uncle Sam still calling for the supplies his sick and wounded boys already needed. For three days Mr. Youtsey hadn't so much as taken off his clothes; for forty-eight hours he hadn't a wink of sleep, but in just a week and a half there had been machinery on the ground and it set up and going, lickety-split, under the tents which he had bought, sight unseen down to the last blue pole, out of the storage quarters of a circus over at Rising Sun.

Through that winter—and it certainly was a hard one, as you'll recall—his office had been a corner curtained off behind a couple of weather-beaten side-show banners, so that La Belle

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over in Italy and Egypt and the rest of the foreign places. He'd had the notion simmering like a stew in a pot on the back part of his mind for quite a spell but had saved it up as a pleasant surprise to be sprung on her after everything about the trip was all fixed.

However, she didn't show any great degree of enthusiasm that night when he told her what had been done. In fact, and almost in so many words, she begged to be excused. It appeared that when Estrella went to Europe she preferred to go with a selected group of young people of her own age; privately she already had been in conference with one or two friends on the project. Or maybe she would wait until she got married—whenever that time might be—and then take a honeymoon tour to England and the Continent or else all the way around the world or somewhere. She wasn't altogether sure just yet what she would do and in the meantime did not care to be hurried.

Her father, who had heard her a hundred times lamenting that an unkindly fate chained her hand and foot to a poky hole like Hobbsville—chained hand and foot was a favorite expression of hers in this connection—could not quite fathom her present attitude. Secretly he was considerably disappointed, not to say hurt. He felt like backing out of the whole thing. But when he admitted as much, Estrella, all at once growing fondly solicitous, insisted he must go along and enjoy himself.

Suddenly she seemed entirely reconciled to bearing for a while longer the shackles of her captivity. She wouldn't be lonely, she promised him that. She would send out invitations for some house-parties and about once in so often she would run up

to Chicago to visit an old schoolmate. It developed there also had been talk among certain members of the younger set about organizing a party to spend the summer at a dude-ranch in Colorado and she might join it, provided the choice of a chaperon suited her. Oh, she'd get along somehow, she told him, giving him a swift pecking kiss on his bald spot. With an affectionate firmness she insisted then and there on his telegraphing and changing the double reservation to a single, which he did, but with a curious sort of blown-out empty sensation inside of him.

He sailed, but didn't stay across as long as he—or she—had counted on. On the ship going over he met a very nice young couple named Sawyer from Saint Joe, Missouri, and on his somewhat timid offer to pay more than a third share of the expenses they made him their traveling companion. He explained when the bargain was being struck that he really had no set program, which was more or less of a white lie, seeing that an itinerary for him had been very painstakingly worked out. He was just kind of knocking around, he told them, and he might as well see one place as another if he could get some (Continued on page 138)

Fatima the Pearl of the Harem had smiled her constant painted smile down upon him while he sat at his desk with mittens on his frosted fingers and a stinking oil-stove between his knees. What the boys under the main top and the menagerie top could endure at the call of their country, he could endure, too, and he had.

But now that sort of thing was over and done with, for ever and ever, amen. For Titus D. Youtsey, Esquire, the holidays had come. All he had to do from now on was to play hooky and laugh at Dame Industry's truant laws. He chafed his thick strong wrists just as a freed galley-slave might chafe the scores where the fetters had eaten into the flesh. He didn't know about galley-slaves but he did know—by hearsay—about the pleasures of going on an everlasting vacation.

Accordingly he put forth, sharp-set on the great adventure. He wired on to New York for passage abroad on the biggest ship afloat; bookings for two he asked for in his telegram and got confirmation back before dark. He had intended that Estrella should go with him, that together they would look at the sights

By BLASCO IBAÑEZ

The 7 W Slave of Women

*The Story of a
MILLIONAIRE
of the
PAMPAS*

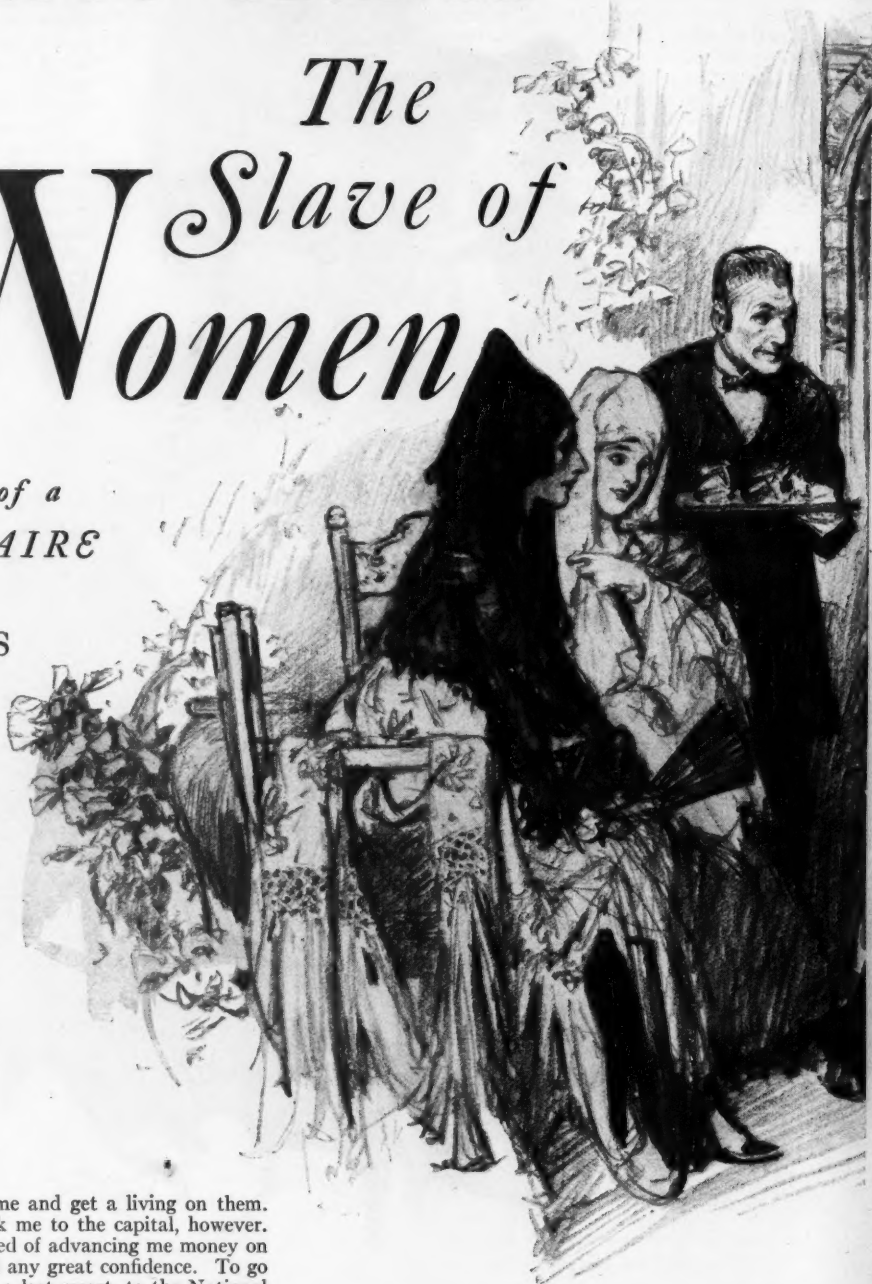
"YOU knew Doctor Romulo Pedraza?" said Sarrano. "Sodid I. I have not spent quite all my life knocking around the restaurants of Montmartre! In getting together the modest competency which enables me to enjoy my present frivolous career, I lived for many years in South America, trying my hand at various things, and experiencing the wildest ups and downs of fortune.

"It was while I was in Argentina that I first met the doctor. I was not living in Buenos Aires, understand. No—I was interested in a colonization project, trying to open up some lands that I had staked out in lower Patagonia—lands, I may say, which had been waiting since the beginning of the world for some optimist to come and get a living on them.

"Financial difficulties often took me to the capital, however. The ordinary banks finally got tired of advancing me money on an enterprise in which I alone had any great confidence. To go ahead I was obliged to appeal, as a last resort, to the National Loan and Mortgage Corporation, a powerful organization backed by government money. I was confident that this bank, which is utilized by the State for developing unused lands, would supply me with capital enough for buying up my personal notes and completing the improvements which, as I trusted, would multiply by a hundredfold the value of my claim.

"It was during my long waits in the antechambers of this bank—government institutions are never in a hurry to accommodate anybody—that I met Doctor Pedraza; and mighty proud I was, I can tell you, to be seen in conversation with that powerful personality.

"Perhaps you know that Doctor Pedraza was not a physician, but a lawyer. Like other 'doctors' of his kind, however, he never practised, even to the extent of handling his own affairs. He wore his title as a sort of nobiliary distinction in that land of rather appalling democracy. He was a business man, as so many gentlemen of his generation were. In his early youth he had acted as a substitute professor for a semester in the law school of the university. Then he had held a number of political offices



in the city government of Buenos Aires, even serving once as a Deputy to the National Congress. But it was not on such glories that his eyes were fixed. He had a social position to maintain, and the expenses of his large family compelled him to make a great deal of money. This was possible only in business.

"Actually he was a speculator in land, buying great strips of territory on money lent him by the banks, and selling them again at huge profits, often without having set eyes on them. Near Buenos Aires he had a splendid ranch, inherited from his parents, and another very respectable one which his wife had brought him as a dowry. Hardly a day went by that his name did not appear in the social columns of the Buenos Aires papers, where he was often grandiloquently referred to as 'a well-known representative of the best in Argentine life.'

"In personal appearance he was like so many of the gentlemen of Argentina—who, for all their refinements of dress and manner, are brought up on ranches and trained to life in the open from their very boyhood. I could never help noticing the contrast between Doctor Pedraza's sturdy, muscular build, and his small,

Illustrations by
F. R. Gruger



C. Doctor Pedraza's wife knew no limit to sustain "the family prestige." "I am a Perez-Zurrialde," she would say with pride.

arching feet, which he always kept impeccably shod in patent leather. I doubt whether Doctor Pedraza failed one evening in his life to put on his dinner jacket, if he were dining with a friend at the club, or formal dress if he were going with his family to the Teatro Colon. Certain it is that his wife and his six daughters would never have allowed him the slightest compromise with the rigorous laws that govern gentlemen the world over; and Doctor Pedraza, though a man of action, and in fact one of the best shots in Argentina, was incapable of offering the slightest resistance to the caprices of the women in his household.

"The doctor, in fact, could see nothing beyond his family. And for that family he was capable of the most extraordinary heroism. That, indeed, is the point I am coming to. Doctor Pedraza was a hero, more a hero than any war or science ever gave us. When soldiers fall, they die with the consolations of glory, knowing that their countrymen will always remember them with pride and affection. The peculiar thing about the heroism of Doctor Pedraza was that people at large never suspected it, that they could not be allowed to suspect it."

During the last fifty years (Sarrano continued) a great change has come about in the affairs of well-to-do families in the Latin world—a change as important as some of those revolutions which overturn political systems and change the bases of property ownership.

In the old days, when a man was ruined—voluntarily, I mean, and not because of something beyond his control—it was almost always through gambling or some love-affair. So-and-so is bankrupt? That's easy: *cherchez la femme!* And it would usually develop that some actress had got her claws into the poor gentleman and slowly raked his fortune away; while his wife would be living in obscurity at home, trying to offset the prodigality of her husband by painful saving.

But one day our modern woman suddenly became aware of the injustice implied in her humble rôle as a "respectable lady." She rebelled against the old concepts of propriety, demanding for herself the money that husbands and fathers formerly spent outside the home. See how it is nowadays! Wives dress and act like the women who were not formerly called ladies; and the only



C *The Duke and the Marquis sent their lawyers to Doctor Pedraza to prepare*

way we now have to recognize the true lady is to take the one that least looks the part—when judged by the old standards. The fact is, at any rate, that now when you ask, "How did So-and-so lose his money?" the answer almost invariably is: "He spent it on his wife and daughters."

Doctor Pedraza's family had felt the full force of this revolution of which I have been speaking. The doctor's problem in life was to be enormously rich, in order that the women dependent on him should never know the meaning of the word privation. In his eyes, his wife was the most distinguished lady of Buenos Aires, and his daughters were destined to marry the richest young men in the country. This admiration for his consort gradually became absolute obedience to her in all her whims. He came to look upon himself as a machine for producing money. To his wife fell the task of bringing "distinction" to the family, by giving it preeminence in the society of the capital.

It was, I may say, by no means surprising that Doctor Pedraza should be so much in love with his wife, though they had been married now for twenty years. Doña Zoila—names like that are common in Argentina—was a fine example of those women of the Argentine patriciate who keep their beauty of face and figure long past middle age, and still have much of their feminine charm

when they are surrounded by flocks of grandchildren. This matron of flashing black eyes and of impressive, arrogant bearing, preserved all the physical splendor of a race that is strong and healthy, which does indeed adopt the most enervating forms of luxury, but seems never to succumb to them.

Doña Zoila was the despot of society in Buenos Aires. Her opinion was law to everyone. She set the styles, and determined the composition, of the Argentine smart set. The modistes of Paris came all the way from France to consult her tastes before launching a novelty on the market; for they knew not only that she bought heavily herself, but that her recommendations were followed by most women of money in the Republic.

Doctor Pedraza never refused a single one of his wife's requests, though the lady knew neither limit nor scruple in the expenditures she made to sustain, as she said, "the family prestige." The Pedrazas lived in a very pretentious mansion in the Palermo Park district. Three automobiles, a large corps of servants, boxes at the Colon during the opera season, and at other theaters the year round, one social affair after the other in honor of the young ladies, completed the brilliant exterior display of this "best family" of Buenos Aires. Few men in Argentina could indeed boast of such enormous expenditures for their wives as



the contracts for marriage with his daughters—and he found himself confronted by two perfect birds of prey.

Doctor Pedraza. His ruinous yearly budget was proof of the native elegance of the woman and of the noble origin which she claimed. For, in the end, even the doctor himself began to believe in the aristocratic descent of the lady he had married.

"I am a Perez-Zurrialde," Doña Zoila would sometimes say with pride. And to flatter her with a supreme tribute to her elegance and good taste, other people had learned to say: "Of course, what else—from a Perez-Zurrialde!"

Now, Doctor Pedraza's grandfather was an ordinary immigrant from Castile, and his wife might have been able to trace her lineage for, say, a century and a half. But that is a long time in the New World, and origins that go back two hundred years are literally lost in the night of history.

The doctor, furthermore, lived in absolute reliance on the conjugal virtues of his wife. If she was assertive and even bold in the inventions which she imported from Europe for the adornment of her person, all her pride went into maintaining her reputation as wife and mother scrupulously intact.

To get back to my story. For three whole weeks I had danced attendance on the President of the National Loan and Mortgage Corporation, going every afternoon to see whether my petition

had been granted. The trouble was, I suppose, that the large sums of money I was asking for could be entrusted to me only after a thorough investigation of my numerous securities. But I remember that one day, after I had waited for hours, and my turn was at last at hand, the president's secretary came out, passed me by, and admitted in my place a distinguished gentleman who had just come in, and had not been waiting at all.

"You must pardon me," the secretary thought it necessary to explain. "That was Doctor Pedraza, one of our most important business men. He has been a Member of Congress."

Well, some days later I was waiting there again, and I found the same gentleman, but sitting in line this time and waiting like the rest of us. That's the way it is the world over, I suppose. There is a certain democracy among beggars. The fact that Doctor Pedraza had come to ask for money and not to lend, had cost him the privilege of free entrance, which he had enjoyed on his first visits. I noticed, even, that one day the president of the bank refused to see him at all.

It was on the occasion of one of these meetings, that now became frequent in the parlors of the bank, that a common friend introduced the doctor to me.

He was there on an errand similar to (Continued on page 144)



C The Columbian Exposition at Chicago—the most stupendous, interesting and significant show

The Busy, Boiling 90's

JUST now it seems to be the fashion to giggle over the 'nineties. Probably in 1950 we will cackle just as loudly over the zigzag sweaters and acrobatic ballroom dances and make-believe deviltries of the 'twenties.

No matter what the 'nineties may have been to others, to me the decade meant a bursting of the cocoon and a glad entrance into the live areas of the world, with the noonday sun striking full upon the prismatic hues of my wide-spread pinions.

In 1890 I was a voiceless desk slave for a patent medicine company in LaFayette, Indiana. In 1900 I had my name on five books, owned a farm, had written a play and made two trips to Europe and was getting ready to inspect China, Japan and the Philippines. Don't criticize the 'nineties when I am around. If it hadn't been for the saving years toward the end of the century, I would be sitting on a baggage-truck somewhere, watching through trains whiz by.

Our fed-up and blasé population finds languid delight in looking at pictures of maidens with waspy waists and trailing skirts, spreading cupolas of hair surmounted by cart-wheel hats smothered under flowers, also pneumatic puff sleeves. The modern porch pup with his meal-sack knickers and lacquered hair and one-piece shirt feels an almost celestial superiority as he studies the photographs showing father and uncle with cavalry mustaches and Weber and Fields derbies, standing alongside of their bikes, wearing clips around their ankles.

Such pictures still look good to me. My blue Napoleon wheel, cost \$80, seemed more aristocratic to me in 1895 than a \$10,000 limousine would seem now. The Gibson Girl has been peeled down but not improved. No theatrical group in existence can compare with the old Augustin Daly Company. To be gay in the open is no more sinful than to indulge in whispered wickedness.

I no longer wear detachable cuffs, large oval scarf-pins or a handkerchief across my abdomen when I am in evening clothes, but I still have a high respect for those who were in the mode thirty years ago.

We have rebelled against the preceding century with so much show-off that a lot of recent arrivals think that nothing, absolutely nothing, happened in the world previous to the arrival of the tea dance and the universal display of hosiery. It seems to me that important events were marching in stately procession during the 'nineties. Or maybe I just began to find out what was happening.

While I was on the staff of the Chicago Record from 1890 to 1900 I attended all of the national conventions, sat at the

ring-side when championship battles were fought, put in a full six months at the Columbian Exposition, was dramatic editor, traveling correspondent and column conductor, found my way eastward as far as the Balkans, Constantinople and Greece, stood in the immediate presence of countless celebrities, began to play golf, and experienced the swooning ecstasy of holding easy money in both hands.

It seems to me that those ten years preceding the entry of a new century were simply saturated with important preparations. Colleges everywhere, for the first time, were turning out large classes of ambitious Bachelors. In the East a multitude of youngsters were recalling what Horace Greeley had said about going West. Throughout the corn belt very embryo but very pulsating journalists, lawyers, doctors and merchant princes tugged at the leash while inquiring the cost of room and board in Chicago. They felt that they had become too large for the village environment.

The town by the lake was becoming a hurry-up metropolis. It was a seething caldron of restless ingredients from everywhere in the known world, "wide open" by preference and deliberately attempting to outdo Sodom and Gomorrah, while incidentally determined to acquire all the graces and merits and garnishments of New York, London and Paris.

It talked loud and boastfully and then made good on the bragging. A cowboy hat in conjunction with a swallowtail. Between the acts of grand opera it used cuss-words and drank Bourbon straight.

The world's greatest achievement for the departing century was pulled off in Chicago. The Columbian Exposition was the most stupendous, interesting and significant show ever spread out for the public. As a demonstration of civic pride, community enterprise and nation-wide cooperation, it has not been matched during the thirty-three years which have slid rapidly away since it bloomed in splendor on the shores of Lake Michigan. That city of gigantic white buildings, fluttering a myriad of flags, and revealing the progress and culture and creative impulses of the whole world, made the Centennial and the Interstate Exposition look like side-shows.

It tacked holiday bunting on a woful period of business depression which was slowly hatching out Free Silver and William Jennings Bryan.

To adopt the kaleidoscopic style of Victor Hugo and "Odd" McIntyre—two good men—I might submit the following omelet of impressions which hold over from my ten years of hastening from one event to another during the 'nineties:



ever spread before the American public.

By George ADE

Eugene Field, in his shirt-sleeves writing copperplate poetry for the children. The American Derby with half of the world, and all of the half-world, parading to Washington Park in horse-drawn vehicles. Saloons and chop-houses saying, "We threw the key into the river." John McCutcheon and I walking home at night in the middle of the street so the footpads could not step out of the alleys and rob us. What a joke it would have been—on the hold-up men!

General Snowden planting his cannon on the hills and pointing them down at Homestead, Pennsylvania. Sullivan reclining heavily under the flare light and Corbett smiling in his corner. Chauncey M. Depew asking the other callers to wait while he gave an interview to his "young friend from Chicago." A long walk and a memorable talk with General Lew Wallace at the Minneapolis Convention of 1892. Also, at this convention, just a glimpse, in the West Hotel, as the door swung open, of William McKinley seated on a bed, refusing the crown which he was to wear four years later. Negro delegates in linen dusters drinking vintage champagne.

Bourke Cockran trying to fight back the Cleveland charge at Chicago—two o'clock in the morning and a torrential storm beating on the ramshackle wooden wigwam. Real drama. Democratic National Headquarters election night, 1892—with William C. Whitney smilingly complacent as Cleveland made the spectacular come-back.

The navies of the world teetering in Hampton Roads—international drinking contests at Old Point Comfort. Grover Cleveland standing in a gusty wind to review the parade at the opening of the World's Fair. Awestricken excursionists baring their heads to the Infanta Eulalia, who rode by in an open carriage, having the time of her life. Buffalo Bill, on a prancing charger, introducing the Rough Riders of the World. Twenty firemen leaping to death from the burning tower of the Cold Storage Building.

Acres and acres of people on Chicago Day—attendance 716,000. The Midway, a jumble of colors and a medley of noises. An inland town suddenly on easy terms with princes and potentates. Flo Ziegfeld breaking into the show business with Sandow as a star.

The closing of the Exposition, followed by a general suggestion of hushed emptiness. The labor war. An army of soldiers on the lake front, sent in by Grover Cleveland against the furious protests of Governor Altgeld. Crazy rumors of mobs and uprisings.

Millionaires in hiding. The true (Continued on page 156)

The FIRST of all the FABLES in SLANG

THE FABLE OF THE VISITOR WHO GOT A LOT FOR THREE DOLLARS

The Learned Phrenologist sat in his Office surrounded by his Whiskers.

Now and then he put a Forefinger to his Brow and glanced at the Mirror to make sure that he still resembled William Cullen Bryant.

Near him, on a Table, was a Pallid Head made of Plaster-of-Paris and stickily ornamented with small Labels.

On the wall was a Chart showing that the Orangoutang does not have Daniel Webster's facial angle.

"Is the Graft played out?" asked the Learned Phrenologist, as he waited. "Is Science up against it or What?"

Then he heard the fall of Heavy Feet and resumed his Imitation. The Door opened and there came into the Room a tall, rangy Person with a Head in the shape of a Rocky Ford Cantaloupe.

Aroused from his Meditation, the Learned Phrenologist looked up at the Stranger as through a Glass, darkly, and pointed to a Red Plush Chair.

The Easy Mark collapsed into the Boarding-House Chair and the Man with more Whiskers than Darwin ever saw stood behind Him and ran his Fingers over his Head, Tarantula-Wise.

"Well, well!" said the Learned Phrenologist. "Enough Benevolence here to do a family of Eight. Courage? I guess yes! Dewey's got the same kind of a Lump right over the Left Ear. Love of Home and Friends—like the ridge behind a Bunker! Firmness—out of sight! Reverence—well, when it comes to Reverence, you're certainly There with the Goods! Conscientiousness, Hope, and Ideality—the Limit! And as for Metaphysical Penetration—oh, Say, the Metaphysical Penetration, right where you part the Hair—oh, Laura! Say, you've got Charles Eliot Norton whipped to a Custard. I've got my Hand on it now. You can feel it yourself, can't you?"

"I can feel Something," replied the Human Being, with a rapt Smile.

"Wit, Compassion and Poetic Talent—right here where I've got my thumb—a Cinch! I think you'll run as high as 98 per cent on all the Intellectual Faculties. In your Case we have a Rare Combination of Executive Ability, or the Power to Command, and those Qualities of Benevolence and Ideality which contribute to the fostering of Permanent Religious Sentiment. I don't know what your present Occupation is, but you ought to be President of a Theological Seminary. Kindly slip me Three Dollars before you Pass Out."

The Tall Man separated himself from Two Days' Pay and then went out on the Street and pushed People off the Sidewalk, He thought so well of Himself.

Thereafter, as before, he drove a Truck, but he was always glad to know that he could have been President of a Theological Seminary.

Moral: A good Jolly is worth Whatever you Pay for it.

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THE LEARNED PHRENOLOGIST



HUMAN BEING

The Romance of a CHORUS GIRL

Rich

by ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE

THIS is the age of paradox; honest hearts beat beneath dress shirts, and if a lady lost her garter today she'd ask the taximan to put it on for her. Imagine being ennobled and given ten thousand shares of Standard Oil stock because you picked up a garter—well, you can't imagine the impossible; the girls roll their stockings, anyway.

But what I'm driving at is this: you can't tell the color of the heart by the color of the shirt. Which brings us right smack into the middle of a conversation between Florine Candless and Bob Hendricks. "You'd oughta," said Bob, "not paint your face the way you do."

"There isn't any of that paint coming off on your face, Mr. Fresh," retorted Florine.

Bob colored. "And the way you talk about kissing ain't so ladylike, either," he stated.

"Didn't mention kissing," sniffed Florine.

"It was what you meant, though," asserted Bob. "I ain't tried to kiss you, have I?"

"Never said you had," smiled Florine. Her manner changed. "Aw, kid, what are you always beefing about? Suppose I do use rouge and try to look like something a gent ought to be proud to be seen with—what of it? Don't you like me?"

"Sure I do. And it's because I like you that I try to wise you up, Florine," said the youth. "Men don't marry flighty girls, you know."

"Are you thinking of asking me to marry you, Mr. Hendricks?" inquired the girl.

"Aw, wait till I get my raise," evaded Bob. "How about a little Charleston?"

They swung out upon the Mammoth Palace dancing floor, and caught the eye of Ziegbaum.

Now, everyone knows of Ziegbaum; he invented girls, rumor hath it. It is credibly reported that every time a girl baby is born, anywhere in America, the parents telegraph Joe Ziegbaum whether she's blonde or brunette, and ask when he wants her to report for rehearsal.

Yes, Joe Ziegbaum, who glorifies them. Now, I don't want to raise hopes in the ambitious breast of every little girl who



Bob was crude, was Florine's first impression. But he was honest. "I've missed you," she said.

may be wiggling her wrists and her ankles as she reads this; Clayborne, Ziegbaum's right-hand man, runs dancing-school, and he can supply the glorifier with all the dancers he needs for the Jollies, the Roof and the road shows. But once in a while Ziegbaum strolls out of that Garden of Eden which he maintains, for a breath of air, or to buy fig-leaves, or what you will.

It was merest chance that brought him there to the Mammoth this evening. Someone had told him that there was a saxophonist playing there who was unique, and it was to hear him that Ziegbaum entered the Mammoth. He was unimpressed by the saxophonist, but a trifle overwhelmed by the magnitude of the Mammoth.

Well, Ziegbaum lingered a moment to watch the spectacle on the floor. Perhaps he wondered how he could reproduce, within the limits of a stage, the scene of merriment here. Perhaps he just enjoyed looking at a flock of girls with their clothes on.

And Florine caught his eye. Have I told you what Florine looked like? Well, you know what a New Orleans gin fizz—excuse me, Mr. Volstead. Well, do you know what a strawberry sundae looks like, one second after the crushed berries have been poured over the vanilla ice-cream?

Maybe Florine's hair was a little more golden than the sunset; and it seems to me that there was a touch of yellow in it; and in the right light there were even glints of brown. No, she hadn't touched it up at all; it was—alive. And full of color. Never looked the same. Under the hair was the whitest skin you ever saw, stained with crimson. Looking at her, you thought of the makers of Florine conferring.

"This little girl is going to be poor," says one maker. "Let's slip her plenty. Give her the Grade-A hair, and the special-extra skin, and the forty-dollar eyes, and the sixty-dollar lashes, and the bottled-in-bond lips and make her

nose out of pre-war stock, and give her a figure that's been raised under glass—"

They must have got together in the affair of Florine, for she had too much to be machine-made. Probably she was the

h

But

Honest

Illustrations by J. W. McGurk

best-looking girl in New York. And oh, boys of elsewhere, adore your darlings while you may, because after you've been to New York you won't think so highly of the home-grown girls. Not that there aren't good-lookers everywhere, but in New York there's nothing else but. At least, the homely ones walk in the shadow and one never sees them.

And Florine topped them all. Ziegbaum stared at her. He nudged his companion, his stage-manager.

"The blonde is pretty; she can dance, too," said Ziegbaum.

Which is the same thing as Napoleon saying a man could fight, or Tex Rickard saying that a bantam has speed.

"Wouldn't look bad in the flower number," said the stage-manager.

But Ziegbaum yawned; he had already lost interest in Florine. Perhaps she had a cast in one eye when you neared her; or maybe she had bad knees. Anyway, Ziegbaum didn't reply to the stage-manager's suggestion, and Florine danced on without knowing how near opportunity had come.

But the old adage about opportunity knocking once is false, like practically everything else that's taught us in our youth.

For, the very next day, a beautiful woman approached the stocking counter at Shulte's, where Florine worked, and while her purchase was being wrapped up, talked graciously to Florine.

"You're too pretty, child, to be working here," said the lady. "Can you dance?"

Florine admitted that she could, and enjoyed doing it.

"My husband, Joe Ziegbaum, ought to be able to find a place in his new production for as pretty a girl as you are," said Mrs. Ziegbaum. "Would you like me to speak to him?"

Don't get excited, girls. No more often than Ziegbaum visits the Mammoth does his wife visit Shulte's. She gets her stockings in Paris, and the chances are she never sent a girl to her husband before and that she never will again.

The Ziegbaums are a model couple; he realizes that his home is no place for the chorus, and his wife realizes that the chorus is no place for the home. But, although the matter was without



"Well, I've missed you," he admitted. "Let's bustle. Got your bag packed? We haven't much time."

precedent, Ziegbaum amiably agreed to look the girl over when Mrs. Ziegbaum mentioned Florine to him that night at dinner.

"Kinda tough," remarked the girl glorifier, "when my wife thinks it's necessary to pick my choruses, but still—"

"So's your old man," interrupted his wife. "I felt sorry for the child. She's beautiful."

"Listen, honey," said Ziegbaum, "if she looks like both of the Cherry sisters she gets across in the new show. That's that."

The Ziegbaums are all right, eh?

Florine told Bob about it that night. He scowled.

"I ain't so keen about it," he said.

"Why, Bob!" she sighed reproachfully.

"Well, those chorus girls go out to supper—there's always a bunch of rich Johns hanging around—"

"But you'll be at the stage door waiting for me, won't you?" she interrupted.

"Yeah; but I'll be there with a subway ticket, and they'll have imported cars."

"As if I cared a hoot for imported cars!" she cried.

"That's all right—till you've been asked to ride in one," he countered sagely. "And just when I'm dead sure to be raised to sixty-five next June, and we could be married—"

"Well?" she said challengingly.

"Huh." He was perversely gloomy. "Sixty-five seems like a lot of dough now, but after you've been on them swell supper parties—but don't let me stand in your way."

"I won't," she said. A slight coolness descended upon them for the rest of the evening.

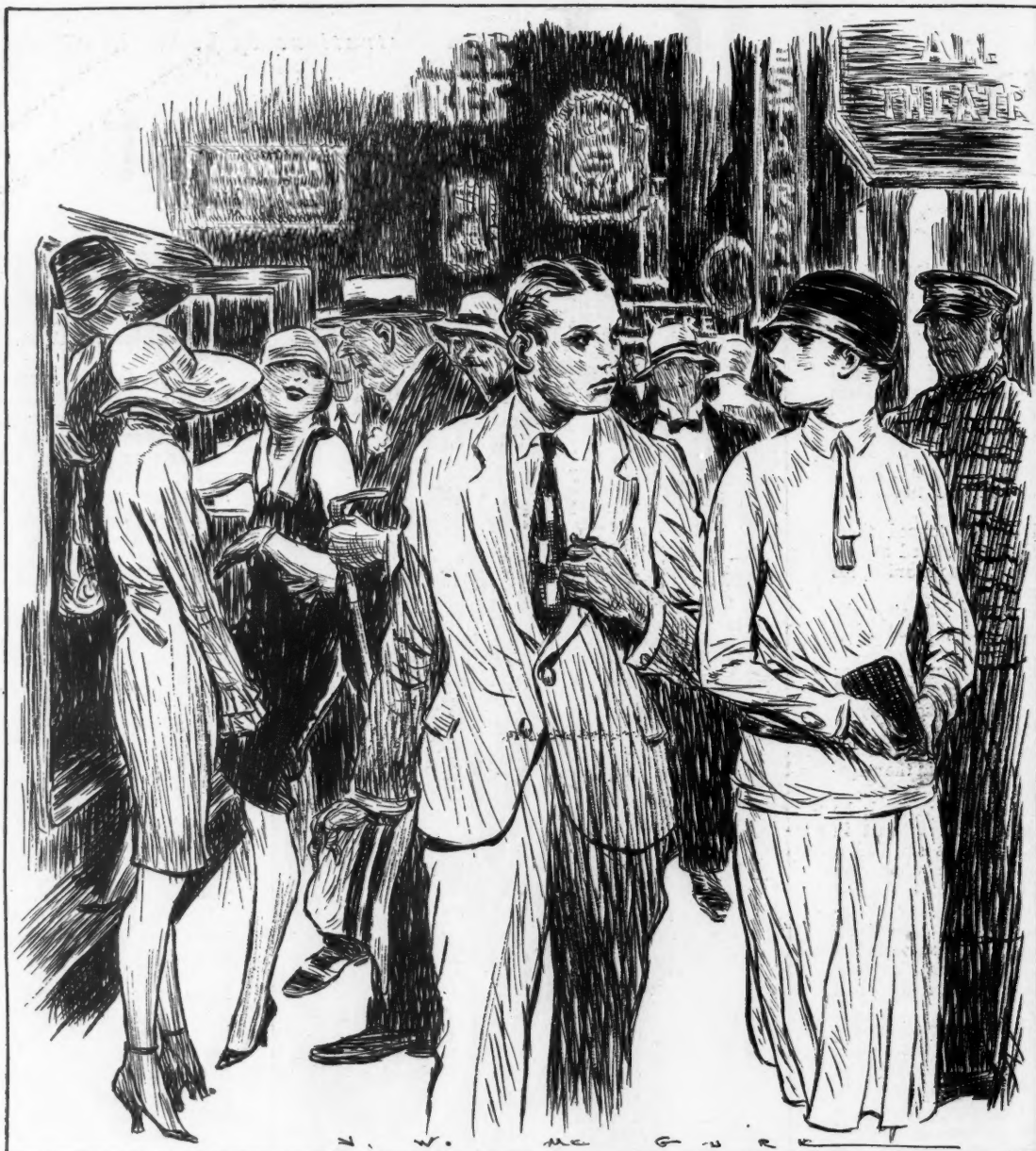
It was as though Bob didn't want her to be successful, Florine thought after she came home. Just because he worked in the wholesale department of Shulte's, was it necessary for her to sell stockings until he got his raise? If she could be in a Ziegbaum show . . .

And Ziegbaum recognized her instantly. That ought to prove I tell the truth about

the superlative quality of her beauty.

"I saw you a couple of nights ago, dancing at the Mammoth Palace," he said.

Florine blushed prettily. "If you can remember me—"



C "Hadn't seen the show for weeks—dropped in tonight," said Dick. "You looked forlorn—" "Are you getting gay with me?" Florine demanded.

Ziegbaum grinned. "Atta girl. Not too shy. Well, I don't like 'em unless they know they've got something. You'll do. The Missus says so, and now I say so. Go down-stairs, find Clayborne and tell him that I said for you to go to work. I want you in the flower number in the new show. You'll be in plenty others, but that's the special one. Sixty a week, kid. Half pay during rehearsals—o. k.?"

"Gosh, yes," breathed Florine.

Ziegbaum eyed her.

"You look nice, kid. You *must* be nice, or the Missus wouldn't have cottoned to you. Well, *be* nice. You last longer that way. Luck, kid."

Be nice? Well, you bet your sweet life she'd be nice! Didn't she have a swell boy, Bob Hendricks, who was crazy about her? When he got his raise in June they'd be married, and maybe she could keep on with her stage career, if Bob wasn't too proud to have his wife working. Anyway, she'd be nice.

She let Bob kiss her the night before the company, after eight weeks of arduous rehearsal, left for the tryout in Atlantic City. He'd never kissed her before; Florine thought it was all right to kid and jolly and fuss a bit, but no petting.

"I hate rouge," said Bob.

"A lot of men, kissing me, would forget I had on any paint," said Florine. "What a prude you are, Bob!"

"Huh. Well, you're going to meet plenty that ain't prudes," he told her.

She wept a little before she went to sleep that night. Here she had let him kiss her, and he complained because she used make-up. Well, it was a good fault, this prudery. Better a hard-working boy with prejudices than a rich John without them.

But next morning she'd managed to forget him. The excitement of meeting the girls at the station, the unhidden admiration of the station loungers for the bevy of beauties, the exciting train-ride—she'd never been farther than Yonkers before—the arrival at Atlantic City, the swimming, the Boardwalk, the gay hotels, the piers . . . The opening night, the applause, the sensational flower number in which the petals fell away as the buds unfolded, revealing the most beautifully formed girls with the loveliest faces that Ziegbaum had been able to find . . . It was wonderful.

Also, Dick Cather wasn't so bad. Ziegbaum himself introduced him.

"This boy is o. k., Florine," he said. "He has seven million all his own and a couple of rich aunts that are real ailing. Help

him spend his dough. My wife and his mother used to be friends, and I can swear to it that he never added up a check in his life. Go-play, children."

"Well, a girl needn't think she's a nun simply because she's going to marry another man. And Dick was nice. His car was always around, he sent flowers once a day, candy every afternoon, took her riding in chairs on the Boardwalk, and was in every way companionable.

But when she returned with the company to New York, Dick had to be told about Bob. Dick wanted to continue the pleasant little supper parties of Atlantic City.

"Sorry," she told him. "I'm engaged, and my beau will want me to go out with him now we're back in town."

"You didn't tell me you were engaged," reproached Dick.

"You didn't ask me," retorted Florine.

But because a girl was engaged, she didn't have to go home every night after the show. Bob needed his sleep; he had to report at work at eight in the morning, and couldn't take Florine out to supper every night. Not that she wanted much. Coffee and sinkers at the nearest lunch room suited her. But she did become hungry after dancing two and a half hours.

"All right," said Bob, when she explained to him. "But why go out with a rich John like this Cather fellow?"

"He's a gentleman," she hotly explained.

Bob sneered. "I've heard of his kind of gentleman. Don't tell me about him. I say—lay off."

"And suppose I refuse?" she countered.

"Better get it straight now. I never liked this theater stuff any more than I liked your painting and powdering. But I've stood for it. But I won't stand for the Johns."

She shrugged the shoulders that, bared, won such favorable attention from the front rows. "You'll have to," Florine said.

But this was a minor spat. The big one came when Ziegbaum needed Florine to pose against a velvet back drop, dressed in—well, nothing. The girl who usually posed was taken ill; Ziegbaum swore that no one save Florine had a figure pretty enough to do the posing, and—Florine posed.

"No decent girl would do it," raved Bob.

"I guess you can take the air," said Florine.

"It smells sweet to me," said Bob.

And so they split up. The engagement was shattered into a thousand bits, and along came Dick.

Lovers feel these things. Dick had stayed away for the first month of the New York run. The news of Florine's engagement was a bit too much for him. But, seeing her posed against the velvet drop, he came around to the stage door.

"You looked forlorn tonight," he greeted her. "Hadh't seen the show for four weeks, dropped in tonight—"

"What do you mean, forlorn?" she demanded. "Are you getting gay with me?"

"Young spitfire," he called her. "I tell you, you seemed lonesome."

"Because I didn't have any clothes on? I don't like fresh people."

"Hang it, Florine, I'm not fresh," expostulated Dick.

She looked at him. He wasn't as good-looking as her Bob. Bob was tall, slim, straight, with sleek, dark brown hair, even eyebrows, long-lashed brown eyes, a straight nose and a good mouth. Dick was a trifle short, snub-nosed, freckled, sandy-haired; no sheik at all.

But he looked honest. She was mollified.

"All right. Where do we go from here?" she asked.

Money was a darned nice thing, when you came to think about it. Instead of a lunch room and the subway, as it would have been with Bob as an escort, it was a closed car, a supper club on

Fifth Avenue, dancing, caviar and squabs. "Had a row with your sweetie?" asked Cather.

She nodded.

"Permanent?" he persisted.

"For keeps, I guess," she sighed.

"Miss him?" asked Cather.

She shrugged. "I'm having a good time, Dick."

"We could have lots of good times, Florine," he told her.

"Meaning?" Her coolness didn't warn him.

"This." He waved an inclusive hand, taking in the room and its symbolic significance, the money it stood for.

"Continue," she said.

"Well, I'd not be exacting. I think you have talent. I believe you can dance as well as any of the principals in the show. I'd get you the best teachers; I'd back a show for you if you wanted. And during this hot summer—mind, I'd not take you out of the piece you're in—we could live at my little place near Great Neck. Run out in my car after the show, swim in the morning—"

She looked at him. Bob thought she wasn't nice because she exposed her body in the theater. Bob was a prude, and she was through with him.

"Well, when do we start for the place in Great Neck?" she smiled.

"Florine! You darling," he breathed. "I'll be round in the morning. You won't go back on me?"

"Come around," she said.

Oh, but what you promise at midnight, when the orchestra is sensuously cooing, and the lights are soft, and you're a bit relaxed and excited at the same time, doesn't seem the same thing in the morning.

Florine woke up a dozen times during that hot July night, and it wasn't the humid air that prevented her breathing. It

was conscience who stabbed her side and awakened her. She'd been a good girl all her life. And now, because she wanted pretty things, soft living, and had had a row with her sweetie, she was considering not being nice, considering tossing overboard all those decencies which had safeguarded her through life.

And at seven in the morning she knew she couldn't go through with it. She telephoned almost hysterically to Bob.

"Bob, honey," she said to him, "come around and see me."

"Leaving on my vacation this morning," he told her. "Going to Hopatcong for two weeks. I got my raise, Florine."

"Of course you did, Bob!" she said.

"Seventy-five, instead of sixty-five," he boasted.

"Good boy"—she admired some more.

"Enough to support two, maybe," he said.

"Just what I'm hinting at, boy," she told him.

"I'll be right around. My train doesn't leave until ten," he called to her.

She bathed and dressed carefully. She put on the teeniest bit of make-up. Bob didn't like paint, but he'd never guess she had any on, so lightly did she touch her lips. She was as fresh as a June violet when, in response to (Cont'd on page 122)



At seven in the morning, Florine knew she couldn't go through with it. "Bob, honey," she said hysterically, "come around and see me."



Elmer thought Doris Gatewood was the most dashing young woman he had ever seen; in fact, more beautiful than Nellie.

The Story So Far:

THE most miserly millionaire in America, probably, was Hiram Butterworth, of Muscatine, Iowa. As his nephew Elmer Clarke said, he had never given anything to anyone except Elmer's mother; when they were children together, he gave her measles.

However, just before Elmer made this remark to Nellie Cathcart, standing at her gate, his Uncle Hiram had died and left him a million dollars. Elmer was not yet aware of his inheritance.

As a matter of fact, old Hiram had just made his will a few days before, frightened by his doctors' reports that he had a weak heart. Never having seen Elmer, he had written the bank of Elmer's home town, Pilarcitos, California, asking about the young man's character, and had received a most glowing report signed by the trust officer, N. C. Cathcart. He had thereupon decided to leave all his money to Elmer, cutting off his other relatives; except a bequest to pay a debt of \$40,000 he had owed for some forty years. With a belated twinge of conscience, he instructed his attorney, Absolom McPeake, that this debt was to be paid in full, with interest to date, to the legal heirs of the creditor.

Shortly afterwards, Hiram Butterworth died in one of his frequent fits of ill temper, mourned by no one—not even his faithful old valet, Bunker, to whom he had left \$10,000 instead of the hundred thousand he had promised the man for years.

Elmer Clarke was one of the most popular young men in the little town of Pilarcitos. From boyhood, he had practically supported his widowed mother. Gassed in the war, he had had to take easy work until he recuperated. He was now working in Sam Haskins's Smoke Shoppe and billiard parlor, to which he

A Blithe New **PETER** *of Love and* **M** **Money**

attracted so many customers that two competitors of Haskins were driven out of business. Elmer's ambition was to raise a loan of \$5000 on the bungalow his mother had left him at her death, and start a smoke shop of his own. But so far cautious old Ansel Moody, president of the Pilarcitos Commercial Trust & Savings Bank, had refused to advance him the money.

Elmer's other ambition was to marry Nellie Cathcart—when his ship came in.

Nellie was an exceptional girl. Good-looking and capable, she held a responsible position in Ansel Moody's bank, and was reputed to have refused the proposal of every eligible young man in town—except Elmer. She it was, indeed (although she kept the fact to herself), who was responsible for his getting the inheritance. She was the N. C. Cathcart who had written the glowing report about Elmer to Hiram Butterworth.

The whole town rejoiced when Elmer was notified by telegram of his good fortune. Elmer, who had resigned his job with Sam Haskins, finally managed to escape the flood of advice and congratulations by going off alone to fish. And that night he took Nellie out for a quiet supper at a country road-house.

He all but proposed to her on their return home; but Nellie, who thought he ought not to come to any decisions on that momentous day, would not let him, though she admitted that she loved him better than anything or anybody in the wide world.

Later that night, alone, she resolved to marry Elmer as quickly as possible. His path would be beset by snares hereafter, and it was the duty of the woman who loved him to protect him from them.

WHEN Elmer Clark strolled down-town the following morning he found Sam Haskins struggling alone with the Smoke Shoppe and looking very sad and disconcerted. A night's rest and the knowledge that he was no longer dependent upon Mr. Haskins had erased all the irritability which Elmer had felt and manifested the day previous.

Albeit his keen reaction to injustice, his natural love for liberty and independence, and the possession of something more than normal masculine courage had conduced to make Elmer aggressive to a point where, under provocation, he would fight a bear-cat and give the bear-cat the first three bites, it must be recorded in Elmer's favor that he was congenitally incapable of holding a grudge. His heart went out now to Sam.

"Good morning, Sam," he cried cheerfully, and swung in behind the cigar counter. "I've been thinking about our silly little tiff yesterday and have come to the conclusion that I can't let you down without notice. I haven't been a millionaire long enough to be hard and disregard the feelings of folks, so get out of my way and let me take charge again while you go forth into the highways and byways and hire my successor."

Sam's harassed countenance lighted up like the Grand Canyon of Arizona at sunset. He thrust out his hand. He was

Novel by

B. KYNE

Sudden Wealth

to Burn

Illustrations by
R. F. Schabelitz



embarrassed. "Guess I was a mite hasty myself, Elmer," he admitted.

"Well, we both feel better now," Elmer declared, and removed from above the cigar lighter the sign which had offended old Anse Moody. "I let you keep that up because I knew it was making enemies for you, Sam," he explained, "but now that I've decided not to buck you, down it comes. When old Moody barges by here after luncheon, slip him a cigar on the house."

Throughout the morning trade was brisk, due to the fact that news had spread around town that the new millionaire was still on duty at the Smoke Shoppe, apparently none the worse for wear. Consequently the citizenry, naively curious, congregated to study Elmer with new interest. Among them was the Clarion reporter, Charley Terrill, who considered this manifestation of democracy of such news value that he sent in another wire story to the United Press Association.

The Los Angeles Record printed it in black-faced type, boxed, on the front page, where it was seen and read that very day by the promoters and bunco steerers who had overlooked the story the day previous. Among the latter was one known to the room clerk of the New Biltmore Hotel as Mr. James P. Hutton, a coal baron from Pennsylvania. To the police, however, Mr. Hutton was known as Colorado Charley.

Upon the instant that he read that story, Colorado Charley's eyebrows elevated automatically, which was always a sure indication that he had struck a lead worth following. For two weeks he had been living in luxury at the New Biltmore, in the hope of working an elaborately conceived real estate swindle on a local bank. However, while he had by no means abandoned this enterprise, he had been disturbed of late by an apprehension common to all predatory animals. He believed that he was being watched by a plain man who haunted the hotel lobby and read the same newspaper too long and too thoroughly.

It would be well, therefore, Colorado Charley concluded, in view of his rapidly disappearing fund of ready money, to branch out in some other line of endeavor—one that promised speedy action and equally speedy returns. In the recently created millionaire cigar clerk and pool-hall manager of Pilarcitos he saw a golden prospect and acted immediately.

In response to a telephone message there appeared at his suite within the hour the companion of Colorado Charley's lighter moments—a gorgeous brunette female of perhaps twenty-five summers. She entered without knocking, sat down in an arm-chair facing Colorado Charley, lighted a gold-tipped and monogrammed cigaret and blew smoke at him.

"Well, old thing?" she queried.

Her voice, low and sweet, filled the room like a chord from a violoncello.

And Doris was thinking: "Isn't he nice-looking? Elmer, you're a nice boy and I like you. Now to make you like me."

"There's game afoot, Mae," the man answered in businesslike tones and handed her the Los Angeles Record with a well-manicured thumb-nail indicating the boxed story.

The woman read it and smiled lazily. "He hasn't got the million yet, Carlo darling," she reminded him. "Why waste your little girl friend's fragrance on the desert air?"

"According to this press story he's going to get it, and when he does we'll take it away from him. Nothing could be simpler, Mae. Of course a little preliminary work is always necessary. As the proposition unfolds itself to me, your job is to go up to Pilarcitos tomorrow. You will call upon Elmer Clarke at his home, introduce yourself as a Sunday supplement news writer come to interview him so you can write a feature story for an Eastern paper—say the New York American—entitled 'How It Feels to Be Poor Today and a Millionaire Tomorrow.' He will be flattered. Do not confine yourself to a mere interview with him. Have a nice little visit and do your stuff. Mae, if you can't land this poor fish out in the grass there isn't another woman in the world who can."

"Suppose he's already married."

Colorado Charley's white, handsome teeth flashed in a gay smile. "So much the better for our purposes, Mae. The most pitiful thing I know of is a small-town married man in the coils of a lady who threatens trouble if he doesn't divorce the wife of his bosom and marry her. In such situations the settlement is always larger and easier to collect. The man is usually the first to suggest a monetary balm."

"He may have a sweetheart."

"If he has, she's a village queen who can be dethroned so fast by you that it's unworthy of you to consider her at all." The pair stared at each other for a minute. "You will be the coy, sweet, shy, trusting little thing, just breaking in as a newspaper woman, and the success of this interview is going to mean so much to you," Colorado Charley went on glibly. "If he should take you to luncheon and offer you a cocktail, don't take it. If he proffers a cigaret, look horrified. If he suggests a ride in his new automobile, mention the desirability of a chaperon. And for the Lord's sake, dress for the part and act it. You've done it before. After you've won him, get him to write to you, but fight his advances because you don't want him to think you're after his money."

"But I can't hang around Pilarcitos indefinitely to pull off a play like that, Carlo. I'll have to return here after I've interviewed him."

"Naturally. Meanwhile I'll have rented a modest furnished bungalow here. I'll be your brother. You and I are orphans, living on a modest income. Lure him down here, invite him to the house for dinner and the rest will be as easy as hitting an elephant with a handful of bird shot."

"I hope he won't turn out to be a tightwad, Carlo."

"He won't. Boobs who have learned to caress a dollar bill before they spend it always put on the dog with the first million that's left them. The only money that means anything to anybody is money that's toiled for and accumulated dollar by dollar. That's why money means nothing in our young lives, Mae."

"Sometimes I think we work hard enough for what we get," the girl sighed.

"Oh, but we do not get it dollar by dollar!" he reminded her.

"It comes to us in chunks—when it comes."

"So does trouble, Carlo . . . Well, this does look like an easy job. I'll tackle it."

Colorado Charley rewarded her with a grateful smile, a kiss and a hug and a hundred dollars for expense money.

AT NOON Elmer Clarke called at Ansel Moody's office. The banker picked up a telegram and waved it at him.

"The Muscatine bank advises the will is all regular, Elmer," old Anse boomed, "an' if anything they're inclined to think the estate will run closer to two million than the figger set by the lawyer who wired you. Bank ought to know, eh? What say, Elmer?" And the financier grinned like a gargoyle.

"It would seem that his bankers ought to have inside information, Mr. Moody." Elmer smiled his compelling smile. "Well, how's my credit this bright summer day?" he hazarded nonchalantly.

"A-r, Elmer, an' grin' up. Bank in Muscatine says their attorneys have read the will an' there ain't a Chinaman's chance to bust it. Thinkin' of borrowin' a little money, Elmer?"

"Why, yes, if you don't mind, Mr. Moody. I'd like to have twenty thousand dollars for, say, a year. It may be that long before the estate is distributed and I'll have to be in Muscatine and traveling back and forth considerably, I dare say."

"Naturally, naturally, Elmer. I understand." The banker pressed a button and Mr. Crittenden entered. "Take Elmer's promissory note for twenty thousand at—well, let's see now, Elmer, the bank's gittin' as high as ten percent on chattel mortgages an' nine percent on farm mortgages an' eight percent on call loans. I reckon we can let you have this for eight-an' a half."

"Quite satisfactory, Mr. Moody." It wasn't really, because Elmer knew he was about to be exploited successfully for the first time, but being a millionaire he concluded not to worry about an extra percent or two.

Mr. Crittenden made out the note, Elmer signed it and Mr. Crittenden credited the twenty thousand dollars to his account in the bank, entered the deposit in a pass-book and with a flourish handed Elmer pass-book and pocket check-book. Elmer thanked Mr. Moody and Mr. Crittenden and on his way out of the bank was captured by Nellie Cathcart, who carried him off to luncheon at the Palace Grill.

"Well, Elmer," said Nellie when they found themselves in the quasi-privacy of a booth, "how does it feel the day after?"

"Aside from a realization that I have dropped a burden with a consequent stiffening of my backbone, I feel as poor as I ever did, Nellie."

"Are you finding your riches a burden?"

"I'm not, dear, but a great many people are. A hundred well-wishers, advisers and salesmen have visited me this morning. By the way, I've gone back to help Sam out until we can break in a new man."

Nellie beamed upon him. "I'm glad you did that, Elmer. No matter what life has in store for you of fame or fortune I shall always want to believe that it cannot spoil you—that you will always be a human being. I want to see you dress well. I want you to enjoy all the good things of life but never forget that that isn't life! By the way, I have been the recipient of numerous congratulations myself. The impression appears to be fairly prevalent in Pilarcitos that I am a coheir with you—after a fashion."

Elmer grinned mischievously. "Pilarcitos is a smart town," he admitted. He broke a shrimp in twain and nibbled it thoughtfully. "Where would you care to live, Nellie? In Los Angeles or San Francisco or New York?"

"I take it," Nellie replied, "that you and I are not formally engaged to be married and that a discussion of our future residence would be premature. Or is your query by way of being a proposal?"

"But—Nellie darling—"

"Now, Elmer, I love you to death. I've admitted that twice within twenty-four hours. You're the only man I've ever loved. But I'm not engaged to you."

"Why not?"

"Yesterday I would have replied, 'Because you've never asked me.' Today I say that I've decided not to engage myself to you until you've had ample opportunity to see the world, juggle that million dollars awhile and see what the other girls look like. Why, you haven't even taken another girl to luncheon since I came to this town. If you please, Elmer, I'd much prefer to marry you after you've got used to ready money rather than before. Meanwhile I'll continue to love you just as devotedly as if I were wearing a diamond engagement ring as big as a headlight, and in the interim we will not discuss the matter of our future residence."

His face clouded. "Well, suppos'n—" he began.

"Oh, dear! I see you're going to insist on settling that question now. Well, Elmer, after we're married I'll live wherever you want to live and be quite happy if you are happy, but if I were to be granted a preference—"

"Yes, of course," he interrupted. "That's why I asked the question."

"Brace yourself for a shock, dearest. I'd like to live in Pilarcitos."

"In this jay town! Why, Nellie, you're not serious—really!"

"I am—really. What's wrong with Pilarcitos?"

"Everything. Everybody knows everybody else and they all talk about each other and each other's affairs. It's dull, quiet, provincial—nothing doing."

"But it's a pretty town, Elmer. I like the rows of locust-trees along the sidewalks; I like the pretty bungalows with roses and bougainvillea covering them; I prefer to be a householder, not a cliff-dweller; I like a garden and my own little garage, and a big kennel and run for a dog; I like a big shanghai rooster for an alarm-clock and I like babies and baby carriages and the kind of mothers who manage their own babies and baby carriages. The country hereabouts is an Eden. God made only one Santa Clara valley. You can have London in the season but I prefer the Santa Clara in blossom time, Elmer."

"Good Lord, Nellie, how you surprise me! Why, there are no social or intellectual contacts here, no—"

"HALT! The dust-brown ranks will stand fast!" Nellie commanded. "Only the day before yesterday a certain altruistic, ambitious and enthusiastic young man, by name Elmer Butterworth Clarke, was planning ways and means for transforming H. Wasservogel's defunct butcher shop into a number of profit-making enterprises to which he meant to cling while growing up with the country. Pilarcitos was a pretty nice town the day before yesterday, wasn't it?"

"Why, Elmer, if you lived in New York it would cost you thousands of dollars a year to support a membership in a rich man's gun club, whereas you and three other small-town sports control the best duck grounds in this county at a cost of about seventy-five dollars a year. New York sportsmen journey out to Tennessee and down to South Carolina for a quail shoot, but you jump in your flivver and with your old plug shooting dog sitting beside you, away you go to the best quail shooting on earth. You're there in an hour and back by noon with a limit bag."

"The same is true of your trout-fishing. You get just as good trap-shooting in Pilarcitos as rich men do at Pinehurst, and there are just as good shots here, even if most of them do wear overalls instead of plus fours. The meat you buy in the local butcher shops, being non-refrigerated, contains vitamin C, which



C "According to this press story, Elmer Clarke's going to get the million," said Colorado Charley, "and we'll take it away from him. Do your stuff, Mae."

is good for you, while lack of vitamin C in his beefsteak piles up doctors' bills on the New York millionaire."

"I'm licked. You have entirely too many reasons, Nellie."

"I have more reasons if pressed for them."

"Well, I've been thinking I'd like to see the other side of the picture, Nellie."

Nellie's soft, brown, firm little hand came across the table and closed on Elmer's. "Dear old adventurous boy! Of course you want to see it, and you want to go prowling alone. I don't

blame you. Last night I came to the conclusion that it is just inevitable that you must buy a certain amount of experience with that million dollars. I thought then that I'd rush you into an immediate marriage to save you all that—in fact, that's really why I egged you on to borrow that twenty thousand dollars from the bank.

"On second thought, however, I've decided that it's better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. You yearn for liberty and independence and you've never known it.

Elmer, step out and see the world. When you've seen all you want of it and find its rocks and dirty, nose, gossipy, mean, cruel, good, tender and lovable people wherever you go, and that no spot on earth has a monopoly on life's pleasures, you might come back to me. I'll be so glad to have you! On the contrary, if you've changed your mind about me—well, I'll understand. I'd rather have you change your mind before marriage than after it. Sometimes I think that young men who marry nowadays give hostages to fortune."

"It wouldn't apply to me, Nellie. I have my fortune."

"Riches sometimes have wings, Elmer."

"What a remarkable philosopher you've grown to be!" he exclaimed admiringly. Playfully he reached over and tweaked the tip of her adorable nose. "Old sweet!" he murmured. "I'm crazy about you, Nellie. Crazier than a March hare!"

"I'm a warlock, dear. I play hunches and I have a hunch about you. Normally, you're too big for this town, but—when pain and anguish wring your brow, perhaps this town will be just right for you. At any rate, it will be not less than eleven months before your Uncle Hiram's estate can be distributed to you and—"

"How do you know, Nellie?"

"I'm a trust officer in a bank and trust officers have to know considerable about estates."

"Oh!"

"Estates of over ten thousand dollars usually drag through the probate courts that long."

"Then by golly, Nellie, I'm going to hop it to Muscatine, Iowa, and speed up the machinery of the law."

"I'd try if I were you, but it will not get you very far."

"I don't quite like your unreasonable preference for Pilarcitos as the scene of our married life, Nellie."

"My dear, I can take Pilarcitos or leave it alone. I merely said I preferred it to a big city."

"Oh!"

Nellie smiled wistfully as she noted his slight hesitation. "You've been to the Great War and you've seen something of the world, Elmer, but really you don't know very much about it," she reminded him. "I'm ages older than you. One sees so much of life, even in a small-town bank."

"You're certainly practical."

As Elmer walked back to the Smoke Shoppe, after parting with Nellie in front of the bank, it occurred to him again that Nellie was not only practical but the most practical girl he had ever known.

And in this Elmer was perfectly right, for he had not known many girls, although he was acquainted with all of the fair sex of Pilarcitos. He was the sort of straight-thinking chap who would never know many women, because even the dullest of them would be too clever for him. Such men as Elmer are predestined to marry the woman they know best, since those they know best are the ones most worth knowing. A tremendous love may not be the forerunner of such unions, but solid comfort is not unusually the aftermath.

While he did not take the trouble to analyze the slight feeling of discomfort that harassed him in the knowledge of Nellie's undoubted practicality and common sense, the fact was that, like ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of his sex, he yearned for a clinging vine rather than a lovely, upstanding wild flower, although of this he was happily unaware.

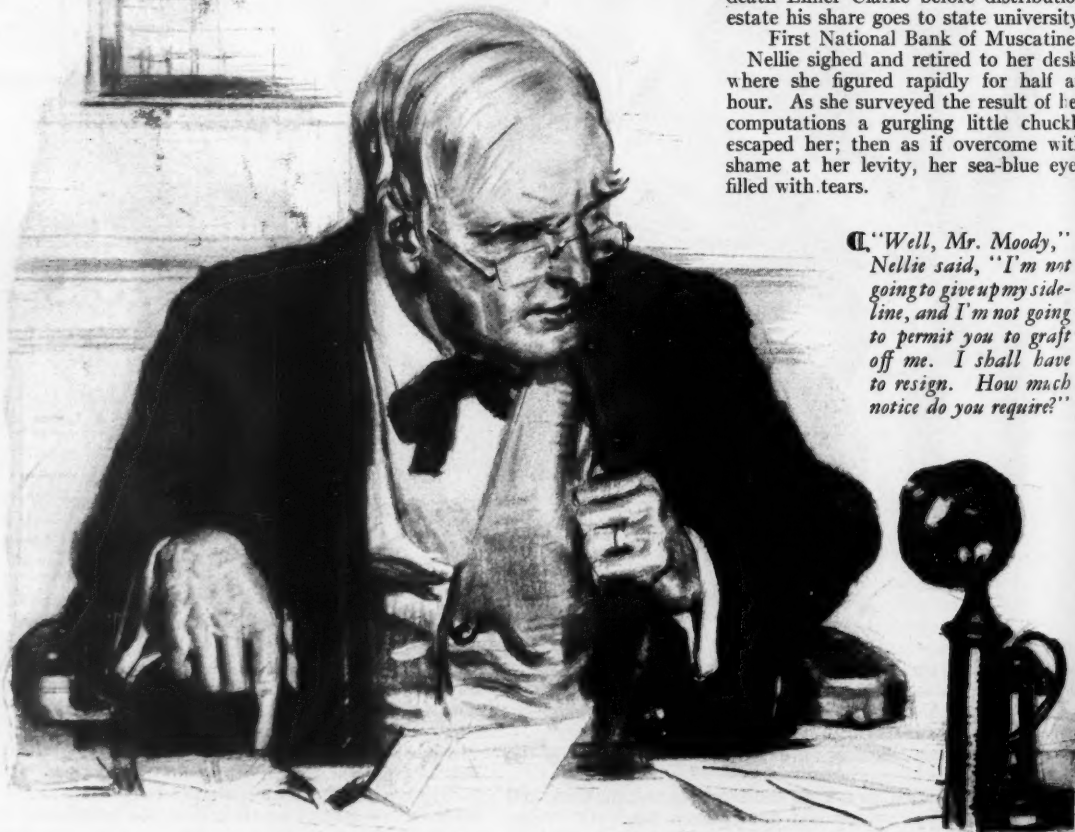
WHEN Nellie returned to the bank after luncheon she went into Anse Moody's office and for the second time perused the telegram which had arrived that morning from the First National Bank of Muscatine. It ran as follows:

"McPeake's estimate estate extremely conservative. Think appraisal will develop double that. Our counsel have read will and pronounce it absolutely air-tight and free from attack on any known grounds. Your customer sole legatee with exception one specific bequest of ten thousand. Will also instructs executor to pay a certain mortgage given to one Benedict Catheron together with interest as per terms of mortgage. Principal sum of mortgage forty thousand dollars. In event death Elmer Clarke before distribution estate his share goes to state university."

First National Bank of Muscatine"

Nellie sighed and retired to her desk, where she figured rapidly for half an hour. As she surveyed the result of her computations a gurgling little chuckle escaped her; then as if overcome with shame at her levity, her sea-blue eyes filled with tears.

"Well, Mr. Moody," Nellie said, "I'm not going to give up my sideline, and I'm not going to permit you to graft off me. I shall have to resign. How much notice do you require?"



The following day was Saturday and the Pilarcitos Commercial Trust & Savings Bank closed as usual at noon. About half past eleven Ansel P. Moody summoned Nellie to his private office; when she appeared he sat and glared at her ferociously over the tops of his square spectacles. After a half-minute of this he spoke in a voice trembling with rage.

"Looky here, miss, if you expect to continue to work in this bank, you got ter git out of the insurance business."

Nellie sat down—uninvited. "Mr. Moody, this is the first intimation I have had that my work as an employee of this bank has been unsatisfactory. In fact, I laid the flattering unction to my soul that I was the most efficient person on your pay-roll."

"You are—an' your work's all right; I'm not kickin' at that. It's your side-lines that rile me."

"You've known for a year that in my spare moments I have been selling all kinds of insurance. You have not hitherto objected to that provided my work in the bank did not suffer in consequence."

"Well, hereafter you cut it out. Hear me!"

"Just why, please?"

"Becuz your side-lines tangle up in mine onc't in a while. For instance, when I loaned Elmer Clarke that twenty thousand dollars yesterday on his unsecured note, you knew I did it becuz of his prospects."

"Now, then, I ain't got no assurance, have I, that Elmer'll live long enough to come into his fortune? I got to have some security for that loan, don't I? What security can I git from him now? Nothin' except life insurance. Now, it's a whole lot easier to sell a policy to a man that's under obligation to you than it is because he owes you anything, ain't it? Well, I figure Elmer won't offer no objection to takin' out a policy to protect the bank, so I stroll up to the Smoke Shoppe this mornin' an' suggest it to him. He's right agreeable an' says he's already thought o' that, for which reason he's applied for a policy with a company represented in this town by you!"

"That is quite true. It occurred to me that you had overlooked suggesting the matter to Elmer when you made the loan, so I, realizing that the bank should be protected, took Elmer out to luncheon yesterday, and between the soup and the nuts I sold him a hundred thousand dollar policy. The bank is a beneficiary to the extent of any approved claim against his estate and somebody else is the beneficiary of all that's left."

"Yes, but does this bank git a fifty-fifty cut on the commission you earn on that policy? That's what I'd like to know."

"Oh, so that's where the shoe pinches, is it? Well, Mr. Moody, I'm not going to give up my side-line and I'm not going to continue it provided I permit you to graft off me. Consequently I shall have to accept your alternative and resign my position here. How much notice do you require?"

Old Anse was mortally stricken—impaired on both horns of a dilemma. If he accepted Nellie's resignation, he would never, never find another

employee like her. Also, he would most certainly alienate the hardly won affections of Elmer Clarke—and a healthy account from the fledgling millionaire would be worth many thousand dollars yearly to the bank.

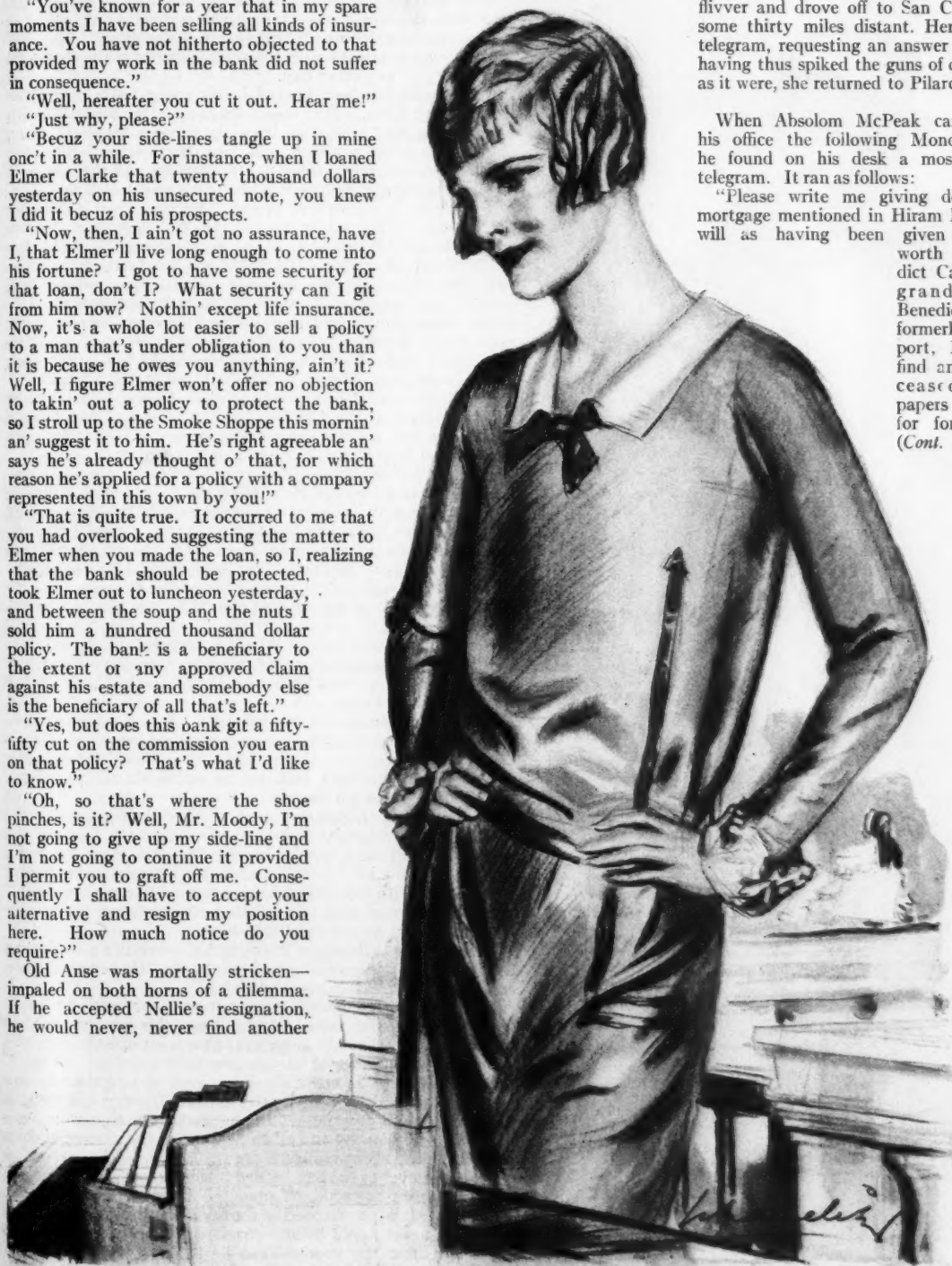
"You women make me sick," he growled. "You ain't got no sense of humorosity. Ain't a one of ye can take a joke." And he slouched up and out of the bank.

Nellie Cathcart's mellow, gurgling little laugh followed him, to give him the lie. She wondered how, as she balanced her cash, Elmer Clarke could find Pilarcitos so dull when she found its very provincialism so delightful.

After luncheon she went down to Elmer Clarke's mail-order garage. She found his old plug shooting dog, Noah, asleep on the lawn, so she invited Noah into Elmer's flivver and drove off to San Carlos, a town some thirty miles distant. Here she sent a telegram, requesting an answer by mail; and having thus spiked the guns of old lady Bray, as it were, she returned to Pilarcitos.

When Absolom McPeak came down to his office the following Monday morning, he found on his desk a most remarkable telegram. It ran as follows:

"Please write me giving details of the mortgage mentioned in Hiram Butterworth's will as having been given by Butterworth to one Benedict Catheron. My grandfather was Benedict Catheron, formerly of Davenport, Iowa, and I find among my deceased mother's papers a mortgage for forty thousand
(Cont. on page 131)



He Had No Chance, By O. O.



Photograph White Studios

George White at the very beginning of his rise to fame, when he was a buck dancer on a vaudeville circuit back in 1907.

IHAD telephoned George White to meet me at my hotel after the theater. He came into the room in that dapper, mignon way of his with: "What the blazes is all this?"

He gives that first impression—a fresh, tough little guy. Broadway corners are filled with his type of sleek, slangy, patent-leather-haired and doggily dressed sophisticates.

As he sat opposite, squirming about, flinging one leg and the other over the arm of the chair, flashing meticulously polished nails, adjusting a delirium tremens scarf, it was difficult to realize that there sat one of the most remarkable figures of the theatrical world today or any other day.

More drama has been packed in his young years than those of any man I know. Here was a street arab who began life with a harmonica and a gift for buck dancing—a "busker" along Chinatown curbs, a saloon and ferry-boat jigger for pitched pennies—who at thirty-three is a millionaire and the owner of his own theater for the presentation of his own lavish revues.

It might be easily written of him, "He never had a chance." His life was whetted to a keenness on the city's flagstones. He was one of eleven children born in the grim catacombs of the Delancey Street tenements. His father was an extremely religious and improvident Jewish garment manufacturer whose frail business went on the rocks when George was nine years old.

The family moved to Toronto, where the overtone of poverty was more pronounced. George joined a gang of street hoodlums who raided fruit stores and small merchants and spent their leisure hours from pilfering in buck dancing on the sidewalks.

Eventually and after numerous arrests George found himself under detention at the Children's Court. He was a bad egg, a stern judge said, and the law would take care of him. One night a week later he picked a lock and bade good-by to Toronto.

He landed in Buffalo, stole a bundle of early morning newspapers and made enough for a filling meal. He then drifted, a tiny bit of human flotsam, to Detroit, where he "bummed" a quarter, spent a nickel car-fare to the country, picked flowers, returned and with the remaining fifteen cents, bought tin-foil with which he wrapped the flowers, and sold them along the streets.

He made enough to buy another harmonica to replace the one the Children's Court had denied him. Life was rosy, for he was a troubadour again grinning at fate.

He became a stable boy at Windsor, Canada, and moved on to Latonia. But the Bowery and Chinatown were calling and with eighteen dollars' savings he crossed the bridge to Cincinnati for a railroad ticket home.

On lower Broadway he applied for a job as a telegraph messenger. The overlord of the messengers looked him over. He was too dirty and raggedy. George hung around awhile and finally, to amuse the other boys, took out his harmonica and jiggled to a tune. Somehow he got the job.

He worked at night and most of his deliveries were in the old Tenderloin's lash of lights—the brothels, the bagnios, the dance-halls and other tinselled haunts of a lustful city. "It was a tough break for a kid," he said, "and while I'm ashamed of it now, I'll be honest with you. My ambition was to be kept by a woman."

That is the engaging side of this amazing young genius—his frankness about secrets most men hide.

So he delivered messages, carrying his harmonica and dancing for the sodden habitués of notorious resorts. He became known as "Swift White, the Messenger Boy."

"I knew every sidewalk hustler from Fourteenth Street to Herald Square," he said. "And I'll say this for the so-called fallen women. They are more loyal than a lot of later guys who patted my back and said 'If you ever need anything, see me.'"

One night with an especially large sheaf of telegrams he was dispatched to "Piggy" Donovan's famous Bowery joint with a telegram for the proprietor. In the sordid atmosphere a negro boy was buck dancing and when he finished the shower of coins caused White's eyes to bulge.

He edged over to the hop-headed pianist whose cigaret dangled from loose lips and said, "Lemme hoof for dese mugs!" The piano started, White stepped to the middle of the floor and jiggled as he had never jiggled before. And at the conclusion he picked up \$12.30 from the floor. Then he threw away his batch of undelivered telegrams—two of which were marked "Death—"

McIntyre But—

Rush"—and the office saw him no more. He teamed up with Bennie Ryan and the two became saloon "buskers" featured at "Nigger Mike" Salter's infamous dive where Irving Berlin was a singing waiter.

From there they went touring in burlesque, where, incidentally, White met Eugene and Willie Howard and Tom Patricola, who are today featured in his revue at more than a thousand a week each. The team of White and Ryan split forty dollars a week. Ambition was stirring. White had an eye on vaudeville. Ryan accused him of being a "Parlor Willie."

"I was," said White a little wistfully, "mingling with another crowd. I was eating after the theater at the sporty old Metropole. Not much of a crowd but better than I was accustomed to. I wanted to get rid of my 'dese, dem and dose' lingo. I had gone to school but a few days, but I was reading Balzac, De Maupassant and Meredith."

White and Ryan separated and White went into variety on his own—a head-liner who achieved twelve weeks successively at Hammerstein's old Victoria, the longest run ever accorded a performer there.

He appeared in the Follies, the Winter Garden and other revues and went back to vaudeville a stronger attraction than ever. Wherever he appeared the house would sell out in advance.

"I began to think," said White, "that if I could fill a theater with a twenty-five-minute act, perhaps I could get some other acts and keep the audience for two hours and a half."

That was the idea that incubated the George White Scandals. White had saved \$12,000. This and other borrowed money he put into the revue. It played a week in Philadelphia and opened in New York. White sat up feverishly to await the verdict of the press. The first review was headed:

"George White's Scandals Proves a Buck Dancer Should Stick to Hoofing."

"I didn't read the rest," he said. "I went to bed and cried myself to sleep."

The next morning he plunged in to save the show—his \$12,000 and the money he had borrowed from friends. In three weeks he had saved it. It was a "sell out" and the show netted him \$400,000.

White came back to town from the road tour and dropped that \$400,000 at the race-tracks, losing \$100,000 on one race.

But he had established a reputation and credit and his next "Scandals" made him slightly in excess of \$400,000. The same thing happened. White lost it on the ponies. The banks grew wary. Up and down Broadway they were chanting the swan-song. A buck dancer was doing his *danse macabre*.

He had \$600. His usual revues opened in June. It was now late July. He went to a music publisher. "I'm broke," he said. "If you'll let me have ten thousand dollars I'll give you life rights to publish all the songs of my show. You'll get yours back on the first show if it goes over—if not, you lose ten thousand."

The publisher gave him the check. Al Jolson put up \$15,000 for a twenty-five percent interest in the show and made White a personal loan of \$10,000.

"I rushed out and hired every actor I saw on Broadway," said White. "When I opened I had a show running ten hours, but I weeded it out and you know the result—it made a half-million."

"What have you learned out of all these experiences?" I asked as he clapped on his hat at a rakish angle and went swinging his cane jauntily down the hall.

"Nothing in particular," he turned to call back, "except it is a pretty good little world and that race-tracks were built for suckers."

And he continued out into the luminous half-light of dawn.



Photograph © Strauss-Peyton

Peter's Pan

Illustrations by
Charles D. Mitchell

ACCORDING to the verbose Noah Webster, who won undying fame with a singularly garrulous book—a novel of 400,000 words!—*Pan* is (a) the god of flocks and pastures, (b) a vessel or dish for domestic uses. In the pungent vernacular of the slangster, however, the word *pin* has an entirely different meaning. To the vast alumni of the School of Experience, *pin* designates one's face. Thus Marlowe's immortal tribute to Helen of Troy, "The face that launched a thousand ships," becomes, in the argot of the street, "The pan which floated a flock of scows."

Peter McSwing, a boxer by inclination and profession, was responsible for my education along these lines. With your permission I will tell you the story of Peter's Pan, trusting that Barrie will feel no more than passing annoyance.

Though I am of little consequence in the development of this *opera bouffe*, it might be well if I introduced myself—at any rate, I will venture to do so. In round numbers, I am Arthur Justin, twenty-one and at present engaged in the matter of foisting Florida real estate upon the public at large. So is my old man. In fact, the property is owned by my father, Calvin Justin, whose sales slogan, "A Lot for a Little!" soon became as famous as "This is bonded stuff!" and "All right, then walk home!"

A word about my parent at this point might not be amiss, though a miss and father are inseparable—not intended as a pun, but no offense taken if you so accept it. My precocious sire's chief diversion is assisting the night clubs to show a profit and convincing the ladies of the ensemble that there is a Santa Claus.

But this is not necessarily moral turpitude—father is just a big baby who loves to go buy buy and though he may be a Large Dairy Products Gentleman, he most certainly knows his butter and eggs!

But to return to pan and Peter McSwing, specialist in assault and battery. One afternoon I was idly musing that I might as well be selling noses as Florida lots as everybody seemed to have one, when there came into my office a thick-necked, broad-shouldered gentleman bearing all the earmarks of a pugilist—that is to say, both his ears closely resembled Brussels sprouts. His nose gave me the impression that he had made an insulting remark to Jack Dempsey on a vacant lot at midnight. Several poorly healed scars added nothing to the beauty of his scowling countenance; in short, here was no Apollo, gentle reader.

My ill-visaged visitor regarded the comely stenographers with unfeigned admiration and they shuddered, the rattle of the typewriters at once becoming a furious din. He executed what he probably intended to be an affable grin and almost caused a



panic among the more timid of the girls. I managed to retain my equanimity and addressed this Caliban politely, inwardly agreeing with those who declare smoking is bad for the nerves. "Is there—eh—something I can do for you?" I inquired.

"I'll state you got a nifty drum here!" he answered hoarsely, ignoring my query and gazing about my rather ornate office with interest. "Any one of them stenogs is front row Follies and I don't mean perhaps! Them babies is enough reason for any guy to open a office—they kill me, no foolin'! What's that one's name with the red hair?"

"Do you wish to buy a lot?" I demanded, with rising indignation.

"I only wish I could—I'd take all them milk-fed blondes off your hands!" he answered fervently. "Still, they's no need for me to bust out cryin', I'm no boy that girls forget. I got smart once and grabbed a boss looker myself! Speakin' of piccalilli, d'ye know who I am?"

"I haven't had the pleasure of meeting you before, sir," I said coldly. Some of the girls had recovered from their fright and were giggling.

"Well, to make a long story short, I'm Pete McSwing, the next light heavyweight champ!" he announced. "Don't make a scene!"

"Really, Mr.—eh—McSwing, if you have no business with me, I——" I began.

By H. C. Witwer

A Comedy

*Which Shows That
Some Men
Are Better Off
HOMELY*



C "What was that crack about my brother?" Jack snarled. "If your brother was a man he wouldn't be dressed up like a dame—add that up!" Peter growled.

"Looky here, don't up-town me, brother!" he cut me off. "You just come within the hair's breath of losin' a heavy sale. I'm no window shopper, get me? You wouldn't think I had a million bucks stashed away, would you?"

"Why—I—you see—" I stammered, a bit flustered.

"Well, I ain't got no million bucks!" again interrupted Monsieur McSwing. "But on the other hand, I ain't no public charge, either. Box fightin's a tough racket, what I mean, and I don't know what day the promoters will tell me I'm all washed up. Who'll stake me to my cakes then? And the answer is, nobody. Listen—they was more than two orphans, in spite of the show!"

"You are an orphan?" I asked him politely. I felt I had to say something.

"I don't mind braggin' that I ain't got a relation in the wide, wide world!" returned Peter. "And I want to take care of my old age, just in case. How much is one of them Florida lots—and remember, you ain't doin' business with no Patsy!"

I immediately assumed the snappy manner of the go-getter salesman as taught me by father and unrolling a huge blue-print I pointed to a choice corner plot.

make ketchup without bustin' tomatoes, hey? Unless you get your smeller wrecked and your ears slapped off, the burnt-up customers thinks you're boxin' your girl's brother. Well, I always been a crowd pleaser and some of them palookas like Muscle-Bound Murphy, for the example, done everything to me but extract my appendix before I knocked 'em for a loop!"

"Oh, I shouldn't allow my—eh—profile to bother me if I were you," I said placatingly. "In your profession, what difference does it make if your ears are a little swollen?"

"They don't look dressy!" answered Peter and glanced abruptly at his arm. "One thing the war done for us roughnecks," he grinned. "It put wrist watches on all of us. If a guy like me had wore one of them gewgaws before the big muss, his pals would of ruined him. Well, I got to haul hips. I'm goin' to box Dizzy Daniels tomorrow night in Brooklyn—bring the kiddies. I'll have you know I'll take this egg even if his old man referees! C'mon over and catch this pettin' party. Goo'by, everybody, see you all at once!" Thus Peter McSwing.

I thought him a bit crude, but certainly most amusing.

That evening I had a dinner engagement with Helene Howe and her brothers, Aubrey and Jack, at their apartment. To say

"Here is one of the very best parcels in our entire holdings!" I declaimed, "and as my father is wild to get rid of—eh—that is, as father desires to enter other fields of promotion, I can let you have this for a song."

"That's kosher with me!" said Peter. "What d'ye want me to sing?"

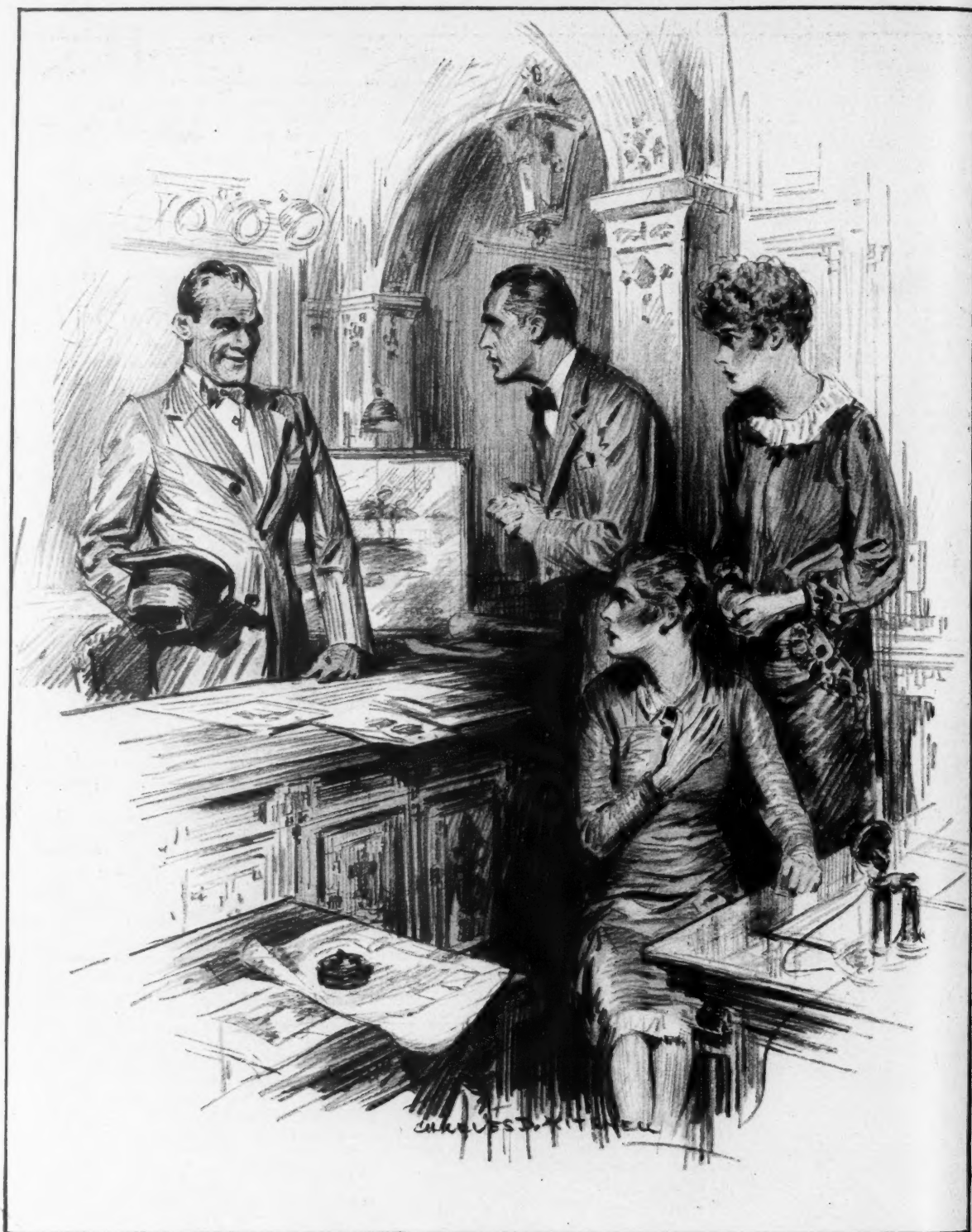
The girls laughed unrestrainedly and I frowned at him. I dislike being chaffed.

I explained that he had taken my remark too literally and with little haggling we closed the deal. In fact Peter waved away my attempts to detail the proportions, drainage and other data on the property.

"The only figures I understand is like, now, these bathin' beauties and the like," he informed me. "I'm no Harvard factory model, by no means. I wouldn't fool you, they had to blow up the school to get me out of the third grade."

He then subjected me to so close and searching a scrutiny that I reddened with embarrassment.

"D'ye know, kid, you're one swell-lookin' guy," he pronounced judiciously to my further annoyance. "You must be a wow with the women! Get a load of this pan of mine—it's a baby-scarer and nobody knows it better than me. Still, I been scrap-pin' for five years now and you can't



C "Get a load of this pan of mine," said McSwing. "It's a baby-scarer. Still, I been scrappin' for five years, and you can't make ketchup without bustin' tomatoes."

that Helene is beautiful is to dismiss the moon with the remark that it is somewhat high.

Helene is—well, breath-taking! There are girls and there is Helene, if you follow me.

Helene operates the fashionable Mayfair Beauty Shoppe on upper Broadway and is the best possible advertisement for her temple of pulchritude, though her school-girl complexion came from a generous Deity and not out of a jar. Aubrey, formerly celebrated hair-dresser in his sister's shop, was then beginning to

become equally famous as a female impersonator—to the intense and undisguised disgust of his husky brother Jack. As Helene once remarked, there was as much difference between the two boys as there is between chicken-pox and chicken salad.

A handsome six-footer whom the fair sex appears to find irresistible, Jack is the source of much entertainment to me. In language spiced with the racy vernacularisms of the day, he speaks with pride of his most peculiar calling—he is a vermin exterminator and I learned about insects from him. For sizable

sums, Jack will engage to rid hotels, apartment-houses and private homes of the pests, his weapon being a dollar's worth of insecticide sprinkled in nooks and corners. Lacking the dollar, Jack will naively substitute salt, flour, talcum powder, corn-starch or whatever is nearest to hand. Equipped with everything but a conscience, he has a personality that would win him a fortune were it not for his congenital aversion to toil. Father, who thinks Jack delightful, engaged him as a sort of body-guard and *persifleur*.

This particular evening was an event, as with her own fair hands Helene had prepared my favorite dish, namely, spaghetti Tetrizzini. The gods have not dined until they have tasted this repast—as Helene concocted it, I doubt if they are worthy to eat it!

"Hey, hey!" exclaimed Jack, holding out his plate for a third helping. "Some poultice, sis! Spaghetti me again, will you? Cheez, you positively hurl up a cruel feed. If Arthur here ever lets you hire a cook he's a chump!"

"Jack, hush your mouth!" cried the blushing Helene. "Anyone would think Arthur and I were married!"

"Don't cry—if he plays his cards right this lad will be a relative of mine soon enough!" returned Jack coolly. "He'd be one now if this was leap-year. I hauled off and run all the ants ragged today in the Palace Hotel and tomorrow—"

"Oh, for heaven's sakes, what a delectable subject for discussion at dinner!" exclaimed Aubrey disgustedly, tossing his fork on the table.

"Can't you ever think of anything else but ants?" demanded Helene.

"Absolutely!" answered the handsome exterminator of vermin, applying himself to the spaghetti with gusto. "Roaches, gnats, spiders, moths and birds of a feather. I'm a Big Insect Man from Beeville, Texas!"

Aubrey coughed violently and pushed away his plate and I winced as Jack kicked me slyly under the table. However, Helene's furious glance cut off further—eh—shop talk from Jack.

"How much longer are you goin' to keep clownin' around tryin' to kid the world that you're another Eltinge?" he asked his brother sarcastically.

"Leave Aubrey alone!" scolded Helene, before the latter could answer. "I know we'll all be proud of him some day. He has a big future before him."

"Blah!" sneered the affectionate Jacques. "He's got the same kind of a future as a middle-aged sardine's got. No matter how ambitious them tasty little fishes is when they're young, why, all they can ever hope to do is wind up in a can!"

OBVIOUSLY eager to change the subject, Helene inquired if I had sold any of father's lots that day and glad to relieve the tension I launched into an account of my interview with Peter McSwing, the pugilist. They all listened with amused interest until I described the gentleman's battered features and his desire for a handsome countenance. At that point, Helene uttered a sudden exclamation of chagrin.

"Why ever didn't you send him to me, Arthur?" she demanded. "Have you actually forgotten that is my business?"

"Sure!" chimed in Jack. "What the Mussolini did you let that proper sap get away for? You're a fine outside man for your future bride's deadfall! We could of vulcanized that guy's pan and put the bee on him for plenty pennies. He's probably stopped so many with his head he's cuckoo! Why—"

"Where do you get that *we* stuff?" interrupted Helene coldly. "Stick to your old insects; I'll run my own beauty parlor. Never mind, Arthur, you can't think of everything."

"Not when he's thinkin' about you all the time!" growled Jack. "I'll dig up Mr. McSwing myself and chase that Barnaby into your trap, Helene, for ten percent of the gate. Now, my idea—"

But the balance of the predatory Jack's animated remarks were lost to me. I simply sat there in silent mortification, thinking what an idiot I had been not to remember that Helene was in partnership with a plastic surgeon. I had allowed Peter McSwing and perhaps several thousand dollars to slip through her fingers on account of my asinine stupidity! Why had I not recalled that almost as many men as women patronize beauty parlors today? They swarm to these luxuriously appointed rejuvenating salons for manicures, hair tinting, massages, scalp treatments, face packs and other bulwarks against the assaults of age and high living. The pretty operators, too, are certainly no discouragement to the masculine trade—many a former front row chorister is now to be found in a beauty parlor earning what Jack would laconically describe as "Plenty!"

"Helene," I said finally, "I am afraid your plastic surgeon would find the rebuilding of Peter McSwing's face a feat indeed. It is scarred almost beyond belief. His ears are—"

"Can do!" interrupted Helene succinctly. "We'll cut a little strip of skin from behind the fold of each ear, sew the ends together and—you'd be surprised! As for the scars—well, we'll take away the edges and the mark left couldn't be found by Sherlock Holmes himself. Oh, I do wish you had sent him over, Arthur!"

"It would have helped sister a great deal," sighed Aubrey. "Since your father doesn't seem particularly enthusiastic about financing her proposed chain of beauty parlors, this would—"

"Just a moment!" I cut in, rising determinedly. "I have Peter McSwing's address. Tomorrow morning I will look this prize-fighter up and sell him the idea of having himself beautified, or die in the attempt!"

"Oh, Arthur, you're a darling!" breathed Helene delightedly, with a smile that sent my pulse racing.

"I been tellin' you this kid was no mug!" grinned Jack.

"C'mon, Aubrey, me and you will catch a movie and let this pair talk about this and that."

"But it's raining and—" began Aubrey doubtfully.

"C'mon, c'mon, snap into it, you're all damp anyways!" snarled his brother, literally yanking him out of his chair.

"Give Art a break, will you?"

Well—I was given a "break."

WHEN I returned to my quarters adjoining father's luxurious suite at the Fitz-Charlton, I saw through his partly opened door that my incorrigible parent was just about to start out for his regular circuit of the smart cabaret belt. I was ready to turn in for the night and my lusty sire was but beginning the evening—*O tempora, O mores!* Father's suave and efficient valet, whom he dubbed Miami as a genuflection to the source of his wealth, was putting the finishing touches on my progenitor's immaculate toilette.

A handsome figure in evening attire, father nodded cheerily to me.

"Get into a dinner coat, Arthur, my boy, and we will go places, see people and do things!" he called genially.

"Father, I've told you before that these midnight parties of yours do not entertain or interest me," I said severely, coming into the room. "You should be in bed at this hour instead of—"

"Now, now, papa spank!" He shook a finger at me waggishly. "I've reached the age of reason and I won't be heckled by my son. Did you promote any boobs—er—that is, have you made any sales today?"

I told him about Peter McSwing immediately and then in a burst of confidence I unfolded my plan to have the pugilist's face made over by Helene's plastic surgeon. Father listened attentively, in frowning silence.

"You are an ass, Arthur, if you don't mind my telling you," he commented when I had finished. "The sale of that corner was a neat job and you shall be rewarded proportionately, but this other hippodrome is a horse from another race-track and sheer lunacy! What does a prize-fighter want his features beautified for? You and your lady will find yourselves up to your necks in grief, even if the operation is successful. My advice is to drop the matter and stop falling in love. The first thing you know, some woman will take you seriously—think how idiotic you'd feel then!"

"Father, you are a confirmed cynic!" I exclaimed irritably.

"If I were not, you would have no inheritance, my son!" he answered coolly. "Car ready, Miami? Good! *Adios*, Arthur—you're a good boy, but I trust you will get over that with the years!"

I can do nothing with father—he has simply got out of hand.

True to my vow, the next morning I hunted down Peter McSwing and laid before him my proposition to transform him from a gargoye into an Adonis. At first Peter was inclined to balk at visiting a beauty parlor for *any reason* and seemed to resent what he thought was my joking suggestion that he do so, but as I warmed up to my subject, he too grew enthusiastic.

"You mean to stand there and tell me them babies can make me as good-lookin' as you?" he demanded incredulously.

"My dear fellow," I laughed. "to my knowledge no one has ever accused me of being handsome. Why, compared to me, you'll look like a matinee idol!"

"All right, kid, I'll take a chance!" he announced. "Though I know I'm goofy to do this, as the guy says whilst twistin' the tiger's tail. But listen here, brother—should this operation turn out to be a flop, I'll drop around to see (Continued on page 204)

B y C O S M O H A M I L T O N



“My wife,” said Lamberhurst. Harewood had never seen a more attractive girl.

The Little Gold Ring

Illustrations by W. E. Heitland

HAREWOOD was startled by a sudden urgent voice. Already, on the verge of sleep, he had been swung back into consciousness by the sharp click of his gate and the sounds of someone blundering among the old stone steps that led up to the terrace. The night was moonless and the cottage, in complete darkness, was far from the inadequate lamp that marked the bend of the lonely road.

“Is anyone awake here? If so, will he or she be good enough to speak to me at once?”

Relighting the still warm candle into whose flame a series of moths had headed to ecstatic death, Harewood got out of bed, put on his dressing-gown and went to the open window. There was something in the peremptory voice of the man below which suggested the right to disturb people, however late the hour.

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He was standing with one tapping foot on the border of bricks that divided a wide bed of geraniums from the path. In the mysterious softness of a June night when a virgin moon trembles behind the protection of the clouds, he appeared to be tall and wiry. He was carrying his cap, and as he stood clear-cut against the sky there was something in his profile that stirred the memory of an offensive incident in Harewood's mind.

“What's the trouble?” he asked.

The face was turned up to the window. “My wife and I are driving or have been trying to drive, to Dover—engine trouble almost all the way. We've now come to an absolute full stop at the bottom of your lane, having turned off the main road by mistake. We can't camp out in the car all night. It's open, and the dew's confoundedly heavy. I saw a light in your window

The Love Story of a Modern Girl and an Old-Fashioned Man

while we were discussing what to do and so I've stumbled up to ask you to help us if you will. We shall be greatly obliged."

"I'll come down," said Harewood. "Only too glad, of course, to do what I can."

This was very bad luck. Something invariably prevented him from sleeping off the wear and tear of a hard-working week in order that he might be in good fettle for golf on Saturday and Sunday. The week before, for instance, his dog had been ill and had had to be nursed all night, and three or four Fridays ago the vicar had insisted upon talking politics until the small hours of the morning. It was obvious that he would now be obliged to lose one valuable hour while he played the good Samaritan to this stranded man and his wife.

He would be called upon probably to forage for food in the kitchen. The quaint old soul who ran the cottage had been in bed since ten, and his sister, asleep on the other side of the house, never permitted herself to be taken unawares and would certainly not make an appearance until she had done those things to her face that went with bridge fights, race meetings and the gatherings of the literati. She was a beauty, you see.

Human sympathy demanded the extension of a helping hand, however, and so, carrying the flickering candle, Harewood, noted for extreme good nature, made his way down the narrow winding staircase to the stone-flagged sitting-room. The cottage could boast of neither gas nor electricity. It was a primitive affair, five hundred years old in parts, and even the so-called modern wing of it dated back to good Queen Anne. As soon as he had given the room its usual Rembrandt effect by lighting the candles on the black oak armoire and those on the uneven shelf of the enormous fireplace, Harewood unbolted the door.

"Will you come in?" he asked.

"Very gladly indeed. Er—my name's Lamberhurst. George. Captain, late R. F. A. Sorry to disturb you and grateful for your kindness. Jove, what a charming house!"

He took a stride or two into the room, which had drawn his instant admiration, as it well deserved to do. It was filled with delightful things.

Harewood tied the rope of his dressing-gown and wore a rather proud smile. He loved the little place that he had bought before the war and to which he now escaped from London every week-end for refreshment of eye and spirit.

"I've never seen a better fireplace than that," Lamberhurst went on, genuinely interested and appreciative, and not saying nice things in order to smooth over his interruption of peace.

"It is rather amusing," said Harewood.

Upon which, evidently thinking that such an adjective was somewhat frivolous, the disturber shot a quick glance at the man whose beauty sleep he had ruined and whose face was in the light. "My Lord," he said to himself, turning away quickly to hide an uneasy flush. "Clive Harewood! If he remembers me we'll spend the night in the car."

Harewood's examination of his uninvited guest had failed, however, to open up in his mind the chapter to which the man belonged.

He saw in him a typical member of his own class, a well-set-up, well-groomed person, with a good nose, a clipped mustache,

a figure devoid of superfluous flesh, and a definite jaw line. He had the steel-like fineness that goes with playing polo and the tanned skin of one who was fortunate enough to live in the open air.

The memory that had been stirred by the outline of his face was a vague one and was not unclouded by a closer look. Before, during and after the war he had met dozens of similar men, and yet, all the same, he felt pretty certain that there was something not altogether to the credit of this one in a mental pigeonhole. He might, of course, be wrong. Under the circumstances, therefore, he would give him the benefit of the doubt.

"Make whatever use you care to of this cottage," he said. "There's absolutely no one within at least eight miles who can tinker at your car. Besides, it's late. Where's your wife?"

Enormously relieved, and more than a little astonished at having been forgotten, Lamberhurst swung back into confidence. "Very nice of you," he said warmly. "I'll fetch her. She's sitting in the car. You don't happen to possess a lantern of sorts, I suppose? I nearly broke my neck coming up your jolly old steps."

Harewood laughed. Here was the sort of egoist who never hesitated to ask for whatever he required, from a whisky and soda to the best bedroom, from a lantern to a cigar. It was characteristic of all men whose hair grew rather low upon their foreheads.

"Any little thing like that," he said, and lighted the one that was always kept in a recess at the side of the door. "I'll lead the way."

The garden had been made in three wide terraces on the slope of a hill. The steps up which Lamberhurst had blundered were lined with herbaceous borders in all their glory of color and scent. Among the delicious flowers in which Clive Harewood took a paternal interest the starlike bloom of the tobacco plant was the only one that slept with open eyes. The whole space was framed in ancient trees whose thick leaved branches stood out darkly against the sky.

Once again the gate clicked as the two men went into the lane. Recent rains had left the earth soggy.

A stray cat from a near-by workman's cottage settled into the hedge. The delicious aroma of new-mown hay hung in the motionless air.

"We were late in leaving town," said Lamberhurst, walking in step. "Our idea was to sleep at the Lord Warden at Dover tonight and cross to Calais in the morning. We're going to potter about France for the rest of the summer."

"I see," said Harewood. "I envy you the chance."

"If you've got a telephone and will tell me who to ring up, I'll get on to the nearest garage early in the morning and clear out of your way."

Harewood laughed again. He had the gift of laughter. "Telephone? What do you take me for? Haven't even got water, except what we pump ourselves. But there's one at the Black Bull half a mile from here and a pretty good mechanic at Kingstone Green who's up fairly early, I think. I don't run a machine but Smith's quite useful, they tell me. Ah, I see."

The car, as dead as mutton, was in the middle of the road. It was smart and highly polished, with a silver angel on its bonnet with outstretched wings. All about it was that air of sheepishness that is worn on such occasions by the members of its breed. And there, leaning nonchalantly against its near side door with a cigaret in her mouth, was a most attractive girl, very young and short-skirted, with an Eton



It was like Lamberhurst, thought Harewood as he brought up the rear, to put the heaviest weight into someone else's hands.



C "To me marriage is a stuffed Victorian canary," the girl said. Harewood's spine grew cold.

bob. She was swinging a little round hat to the rhythm of the tune that she was humming. In the soft light of the lantern with which he covered her Harewood saw all this, as well as two wide-apart eyes, a little nose with a blunt tip and an unusually humorous mouth.

"My wife," said Lamberhurst, adding, after a brief hesitation, "You—you forgot to give me your name."

"Harewood, Clive. Major, late R. F. A." He provided the same Who's Who of himself as Lamberhurst had offered, and cut an odd appearance in that place with a dressing-gown over

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pajamas and his feet in bathroom slippers. He was glad that his dressing-gown was a smart one as things had turned out. He had never seen a more attractive girl than Mrs. George Lamberhurst.

A clear voice, round and warm, said: "How do you do. You must be cursing us. That's the worst of these cheap cars."

"We won't argue about that," said Lamberhurst. "The point is this. Major Harewood has been kind enough to say that we may use his cottage. If you'll carry your dressing-case, Diana, I'll take mine, and our host, if he doesn't mind, can bring up your small trunk. He looks a hefty fellow."

Harewood congratulated himself upon being a judge of character. It was like this man to put the heaviest weight into someone else's hands. "If you will take the lantern," he said to Mrs. Lamberhurst, "and lead the way I'll manage both cases. The gate's on the left of the lane about a hundred yards up. Look out you don't slip on the steps. They're wet."

"Thanks a thousand times. I thought we were doomed to sit in the car. We're in luck tonight."

She took the lantern, but before obeying orders flashed it coolly at Harewood.

What she saw she liked.

She liked the cottage, too, and said so, both to herself and to its owner as soon as he arrived. She enthused about the thatch, the beams, the stone floor, the prints, the Toby jugs and the wide settles that stood on each side of the fireplace. She was very keen about the long line of pewter plates, the gun rack, the reek of tobacco and wet Harris tweed. "Exactly my idea of what a cottage should be," she wound up and made herself at home.

When Harewood put down the suitcase at the foot of the stairs he noticed that the initials on it were not D. L. but D. B. "Honeymoon, probably," he said to himself. "No time yet to have acquired married luggage. Lucky fellow, George." He was therefore, much surprised when the young bride drew back from her husband's affectionate touch with a cutting expression of scorn.

To cover an incident which he knew had been seen by his host, Lamberhurst tried to laugh. Pachydermatous as he was, he was puzzled and hurt. How on earth had he earned that look, and brought about so unexpected an attitude?

Harewood tactfully broke an awkward silence by dumping the trunk on the floor.

Whereupon Lamberhurst spoke. "Have you any ideas, Harewood, I mean as to what precisely you'd like us to do? I can camp on one of the settles, of course, and be perfectly comfortable. But if you have a room in which my wife may sleep . . ."

"Small as the cottage is," said Harewood, filling in the pause. "it boasts of a room for guests. I shall be only too delighted if you'll make use of it." He bowed to the charming bride. "Won't you have something to eat? I don't know what there is in the larder but I'm a wizard at scrambled eggs."

"No, no. Please don't bother," said Mrs. Lamberhurst. "I'm not hungry. And as for the spare room, it's awfully good of you to offer it to us. But so far as I'm concerned I'm far too wide awake to attempt to sleep tonight. I'll sit here, if you don't mind, and read one of your numerous books."

There was a momentary flick of anger then in Lamberhurst's eyes.

"That's absurd," he said sharply. "You'll be completely doggo in the morning. Why not take advantage of Harewood's kindness?" He turned to Harewood as though the matter was settled. "May I explore the geography of your house or will you lead the way?"

Appearing to accept the unspoken suggestion that argument was barred, Mrs. Lamberhurst made a long arm, opened the silver

box that stood on the nearest table and tapped a cigaret expertly on the nail of her thumb.

Harewood picked up the cases and put his foot on the stairs. "Bring a candle," he said, "will you?" But on his way up he heard the two quick questions which were asked by his visitors.

"Diana, what on earth's the idea?"

"Did I never tell you how much I detest a liar?"

"I must wait until you come," said Harewood, reminding them that he was in ear-shot. "There are no lights up-stairs." And as Lamberhurst followed immediately he proceeded on his way.

He was curious and astonished. There was something in this girl's icy dislike that puzzled him beyond words. The look of disgust that was in her eyes when she drew away from her husband seemed to be an amazing one to use on a honeymoon. He had assumed that that's what it was.

Lack of money had forced Harewood to do no more than think very vaguely of marriage. The war had swept him in at the beginning of his career at the bar and when he had had the luck to escape with his life, had left him high and dry. Since the Armistice and the moral and mental upheavals from which he had had to recover, his struggle to regain a foothold in an overcrowded profession had occupied all his time. He was only now in a position to be able to keep a wife.

He looked forward to marriage with what, he knew quite well, was an old-fashioned seriousness. In spite of the moral laxity of

post-war days and the wild rush for divorce that was going on everywhere, he regarded marriage as an institution to be treated with idealism and even reverence. The peculiarity of the relationship between Lamberhurst and his wife, a charming and exceptional girl, struck a jarring note. He was not in the least surprised at the fact that Lamberhurst was a liar, but he wondered why Mrs. Lamberhurst had flung the word at his head after her perfectly affectionate attitude at the bottom of the lane. What had happened in the sitting-room to cause so sudden a split? "And where on earth," he asked himself, "have I seen this man before?"

The spare room was in apple-pie order. The neat old lady who ran the cottage always saw to that. The nice aroma of lavender was in the air. It came from those little bags that were placed in the drawers of the highboy.

"Very jolly," said Lamberhurst, who seemed determined to be cheerful. "Really quite large, by Jove. I love these sloping floors." He put the dressing-case on the bed with an air of complete satisfaction. "I'll unpack for my wife," he added, and commenced to open the case.

Harewood said "Good idea," left him to his work and returned to the sitting-room. He found the girl standing with her back to the fireplace. It made a queer old frame for such a youthful figure. In the soft light of the candles she looked younger than ever, he thought,

though unruffled and cool. She might indeed have been married for years and be the owner of the cottage. He had never seen a woman who could adjust herself to strange surroundings with such perfect ease.

"Your husband will have everything ready in about ten minutes," he said. "Of course you won't read all night. In the meantime if I can do anything for you, please tell me."

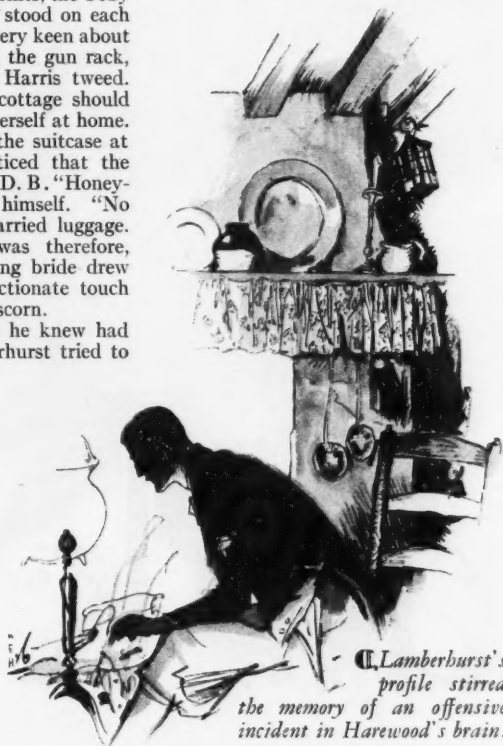
She gave him a steady look and asked a most curious question. "Is there a key in that bedroom door?"

"I think so. In fact I'm sure there is. Why?"

"Only that I like a door with a key," she said. "Are you by any chance a relation of the Major Harewood who was commanding a battery in March, 1918, near Villers Cotteret and was cut off during the Great Retreat? He picked up my brother, who was badly wounded, and brought him in."

"By Jove," said Harewood. "Then the 'B' I saw on your bag stands for Banbury. I heard a lot about you from your brother. How do you do, all over again?"

She laughed and with a frank and (Continued on page 122)



Lamberhurst's profile stirred the memory of an offensive incident in Harewood's brain.

Concluding—
A Novel
of the
Eternal
Conflict
between
Man and
Woman

By *Martha*



Dark

"IT'S remarkable, most remarkable, the way these people manage, from time to time, a tragedy or a near-tragedy to break the even tenor of their ways," said Mr. Tingley, in a tone of half-humorous superiority by which he considered that he distinguished himself from "these people."

Doctor Muller, thinking his own thoughts in the leather depths of the really comfortable chair into which Tingley always urged him when he came here for an evening's visit, heard his host with that small part of his ear with which he deemed it necessary to listen to him. He was going over in his own mind the events of three nights ago, when his office telephone had jangled him out of the pleasant indifference to life that had taken possession of him after a number of bracers.

The school principal's observation roused him momentarily. "Um-m-m—not so remarkable, Tingley," he disagreed. "It's a pretty old habit—this business of breaking life's monotony. I believe Adam and Eve started it—although you might argue that in their case it was neither tragedy nor near-tragedy."

Tingley's laugh was meant to be lightly sophisticated, but he could not help the feeling that facetious references to Holy Writ

were scarcely in good form. On the other hand, he always made allowances for Muller. The old doctor's quips frequently bore the shadow of vulgarity.

Muller, however, lapsed once again into his musings, was wholly unaware of the delicate play of his host's sensibilities. He had slipped back to three nights ago and was seated in his own dingy office with the sound of his telephone rousing him from his pleasant stupor. Lucian Dorrit's voice was on the wire, curt, harsh, summoning him to that stone house his wife had built. Something had happened there. He was on his way again to the Murker farm, through a fog that was like the pall of death. Lucian, like a man in a trance, was opening the door for him, his face gray—the gray of steel, emotionless. On a chair near the stove sat Bert Murker, shivering like a beaten dog.

And then Lucian was speaking.

"I carried Hattie in from the pit in the quarry an hour ago. She's up-stairs—on the bed. I think she is dying."

Later, when Muller came down again to the kitchen where Lucian was sitting like a man of stone—"If she lives, Luce, she'll be bedridden for the rest of her life."

Ostenso

who wrote
that
vivid
Story
"WILD
GEESE"



Illustrations by
W. Smithson
Broadhead

Returning home late one night,
Luce came upon a scene be-
tween Karen and Bert that
stopped the breath in his throat.

Dawn

He had had to tell Lucian Dorrit that. But not a muscle of Lucian's face had moved. Muller had sat down beside him then and had waited. Asked no questions, just waited. Presently, in a few terse sentences, the story came out. No doubt of its being the truth. It was too grim to be anything else.

"... And then—I went out—to look for her. No—first I carried the mattress up—and put it on the cot. It seemed the important thing then—the only thing that mattered. You see—I thought I had to win out, Muller. And I won out—you understand! I won out! Then I went to look for her. Just human to do that, eh? Somehow I knew where to look." He paused, running his hand across his forehead. "I thought at first, Muller, that she was dead, you understand."

"Dead?" Bert Murker's voice, high, shrill, had startled Muller, but Lucian seemed not to have heard it. He sat with his eyes upon Muller's face.

And then Muller had got to his feet and paced. "It would have been—better," he had said gruffly.

Seated now in the deep comfort of Tingley's big chair, Muller recalled vividly how he had left the house then and had gone out

into the gray dawn, windy, clear, cold, stinging with the first hint of winter. Lucian had walked with him to the gate, the zinc-gray squalor of the early light revealing his face pitilessly. Muller, distraught from the events of the night, had kept his eyes studiously away from those of the younger man. He would have wept at the look of him. He had talked briskly of the doctor he would call in from Lost River to assist him—and of having Mrs. Blundell come out at once to take charge of things until a trained nurse could be got—and of how it would, perhaps, be wisest not to have Agatha Dorrit come, although she would wish to.

And at the end of all his cheerful talk, Lucian had raised his face and said vacantly, "Thanks, Muller," and had added, when Muller shook hands with him: "I know you'll do all you can. But I want you to understand one thing—I don't want any of your pity, Muller. I don't want it—because I don't need it. Perhaps I'll be in hell for the rest of my life, but I'll be there free. And that's what I wanted, wasn't it?"

Well . . . Tingley was urging Muller to accept a cigar.

"You wouldn't call that—that Adam and Eve story a—a comedy exactly, would you, Muller?"

"Eh? What—why not? Why not?" He bit off the end of his cigar.

Tingley smiled a bit loftily. "I suppose it's all in the point of view, Muller," he observed. "It's a bit original, that's all."

Muller changed the subject abruptly.

"Do you think this cold snap is going to last right through till we have the winter down on us, Tingley?" he asked.

"The signs seem to point that way," Tingley remarked with a smile. "Mons Torson left for the woods yesterday."

Muller looked up, surprised. "I didn't know that," he said.

"I don't think anyone knew it till he was gone. He's away a full month earlier than usual."

Muller was silent for some time. He was wondering just what had moved Torson to leave so suddenly the day after the misfortune had befallen Lucian Dorrit's wife. Could there be any possible connection there? Torson was a strange man—the whole human race was strange, for that matter. Tingley's voice brought him to himself again.

"You know, Muller, there's something about that man Mons Torson that rouses one's curiosity. I've been wondering about him myself for a while back. And I'm not the only man in Loyola who has been wondering."

"What do you mean by that, Tingley?"

"Well, there are stories going the rounds, Muller—especially during the last two or three days."

"Stories? What stories?"

Tingley seemed at a loss for a moment as he strove to bring together the stray bits of gossip that had come his way since the news of Hattie's mishap had reached Loyola three days before. Muller himself, through the Blundells, had been responsible for the form in which the news had come to them. Lucian Dorrit's wife, it seemed, had gone to Blacksnake in search of her black mare that had wandered that way earlier in the day. The fog had come down suddenly and she had lost her footing and fallen into the pit, where she had been found later by Lucian, who had gone out to hunt for her. The circumstances were simple enough, believable enough, acceptable too, when the tragic incident of little Andy Anderson was recalled.

"The fact is, Muller, that story about Hattie's going out in the fog to look for the mare isn't as convincing as it seemed to be at first."

Muller was losing patience, but he controlled his voice and manner with a little effort. "True stories aren't always as convincing as they might be, Tingley," he said. "But I don't see what's wrong with this one."



Lucian knew now what he wanted, had wanted
"Go on, I'll take it! Do you think you can hurt



for a century of hatred, it seemed . . . Mons Torson's voice came haltingly:
me now? I knew you'd find out. But I've come back—I'm going to pay up."

"Well, in the first place, there doesn't seem to be any good reason why a woman should go looking for a strayed horse when there are two men about the house to do it."

"Humph! Anything else?"

"Well—yes—there is, Muller. It seems that Luce and Hattie haven't been getting along as well as it was thought. I don't know how that got out, but it's being talked about in town. And they are saying that Torson figures in the case, too. As man to man, Muller, do you think there could be anything to it?"

Muller was silent while he puffed thoughtfully at his cigar. When he spoke, finally, it was to express himself in the form that his host would most easily understand.

"Tingley," he said, "as man to man—your friends are a lot of gossiping liars."

"I'm glad to hear that, Muller," Tingley replied. "Won't you have a fresh cigar?"

EARLY the next forenoon, Karen Strand entered Muller's office as he was on the point of leaving to make his daily call at the Murker place. The girl's face was white as chalk. For a moment Muller feared that some calamity had overtaken her.

"Well, my chicken, what's happened to you?" he inquired with an effort at cheerfulness.

"Doctor Muller," she said swiftly, "are you going up to the Dorrits?"

He nodded.

"You must take me with you. That's why I've come. I want to go up and—and help take care of Hattie. I can at least look after the house. I've talked it all over with Kjaere. I've got to go!"

There was note of resoluteness in the girl's voice, a precise finality that he had never detected there before. He played for time.

"Now—just a minute, Carrie. Sit down here till I get straight on this. When did you turn nurse—and when did you make up your mind that you had to nurse Hattie Murker?" He peered at her sharply as he spoke.

"It has taken me three days to make up my mind—isn't that long enough? Are you going to take me out with you or must I walk?"

"You don't look fit to be playing nurse," he told her abruptly.

"Never you mind how I look," she retorted. "I'm all right or I wouldn't be here."

"What makes you think you'll be welcome—up there—if I do take you along?"

"If I'm not—I want to find that out. I won't stay if I'm not wanted. I came to you because I want you to make the offer to her. I want you to tell her I'm ready to come."

"And (Continued on page 108)

The Elephant

IT WAS the melancholy hour of sunset. The immemorial twilight hour when man walks alone, in exile with his wordless sorrow. The time of day when the bravest heart surrenders to a mood as platitudinous and as pat as the sentiment of a colored post-card. In all the world it is so. And in no place can it be more so than in a boarding-house.

It was so even in Mrs. Fisher's boarding-house—strictly for the profession. In this hour, even these careless gipsies of the spot-light were silent with vague thoughts of their eternal exile. Or almost silent—as silent, say, as Mrs. Fisher's lodgers might become.

On the third floor sounded a thumping like a syncopated dirge. The Four Tumbling Tarks rehearsing their refined knock-about act. A measured shuffle somewhere deep in the gaunt house. Eddie Dean, the nifty hoofer, warming up his soft-shoe routine. From the basement a nostalgic whimpering. Olaf, the trained seal—another exile—wistful for a snow-powdered rock at the edge of a far sea.

In the room of Dan Sawtelle, king of all sword swallowers, the card game on top of Dan's trunk went forward like a solemn ritual. The players made their bids in whispers and played their trumps like timid sacrificial offerings.

A muffled, syncopated thumping. The measured shuffle. A high, falsetto pitch to Olaf's whimpering. Then, shrill and mad: "War-r-eee-oomf!"

A solitary, trumpeting shriek. A blast of challenging despair. The mournful, defiant call of an elephant!

Hearing it, you would have thought of the war elephants of Old Carthage, their tusks armored like scimitars and their trunks painted vermilion. Maybe a single elephant, with an arrow in its eye, abandoned on the battle-field and sounding its war-call against a red sky. Or you might have thought of the zoo at feeding time.

"War-r-eee-oomf!"

Over the house came a terrorized hush—the awed hush of the jungle when the master of the jungle has spoken.

The card game halted. M. Jacques LaVelle, vaudeville's premier knife-and-ax-thrower, still held the left bower in mid-air as Mrs. Fisher came into the room.

Mrs. Fisher was pale. She wore a spiritless wrapper. She had been yanked from a nap by the devastating elephant cry. Her landlady dignity struggled to triumph over her alarm and over the faded dishabille.

"If he's sneaked an elephant up in his room——" Mrs. Fisher allowed the threat in her voice to complete the sentence.

From over their heads came a monotonous scuffling of heavy feet. The sound an elephant makes, rocking restlessly from one pair of clumsy hoofs to the other.

"I told him, very reasonable," continued Mrs. Fisher, "that I wouldn't stand for no elephants. I says: 'You are welcome yourself, Mr. Hagermann,' I says, 'like any professional, if it's a bearded lady or a troupe of Arab acrobats. And we're all just like one big family. But elephants,' I says, 'are out, Mr. Hagermann. They are positively barred. If it was trained parrots, now, or a educated monkey,' I says, 'But not elephants. Elephants ain't—well, they ain't reasonable.'"

"Aw, there's no chance he's shilled a elephant in on you, Mother Fisher." Dan Sawtelle tried to make his whisper assuring. "Since this Hagermann walks out on the Great Dolling Brothers' show, he ain't got a elephant to his name."

"But that terrible noise," persisted Mrs. Fisher. "That was a elephant noise."

Minnie Sawtelle, trainer of Olaf the seal and wife of the sword swallower, lighted the

*Young,
but bright
for his age.*

Illustrations by The Author

gas. Its wheezy illumination helped a little to dispel the spectral gloom. Only a little, though. Mrs. Fisher's gas-jets were economically adjusted.

"Hagermann makes that noise hisself," said M. Jacques LaVelle, as if to convince himself no less than the others. "Around the circus lot, they tell me, he's lived with elephants so long that he *thinks* like a elephant and *acts* like a elephant. Gosh, he even *looks* like one. That's why they call him Elephant Gust."

The irrepressible Bert Coons, of Coons and Cooney, smart sidewalk chatter and extemporaneous rhymesters, tried to assist the anemic gas-jet in brightening the wraith-filled hour.

"To make him feel at home," he suggested, sotto voce, "maybe we should stake this Elephant Gust to a bag o' peanuts."

He was not encouraged. Above them the heavy monotone had grown louder.

"Do you suppose," asked Mlle. Blanchette, the strong-jaw act, "that he could have elephant's-what's-this, like Big Annie, the side-show fat girl?"

Her vocabulary had recoiled before "elephantiasis." But they knew what she meant.

"No; that disease is when something happens to the old shape," explained M. Jacques. "This what Hagermann's got is more deeper. Like mental suggestion or this psycho-analysis or something. You know, where a party croaks and comes back to earth to play a return date. Only this time, instead of being a man, he's doing a animal imitation. Or vici versa."

"That's worse'n having a on-the-square elephant for a lodger," Mrs. Fisher shivered. "But why did he make that noise?"

"He's lonesome—and he's sore," said M. Jacques mysteriously. He was pleased to find himself, suddenly, an authority.

"Then why don't he mosey back to the circus," demanded Kitty LaVelle, wife of M. Jacques, "and get chummy with the other elephants?"

"It's something else makes Elephant Gust this way," replied M. Jacques. "Don't you remember how that girl of his run away with the lion-tamer?"

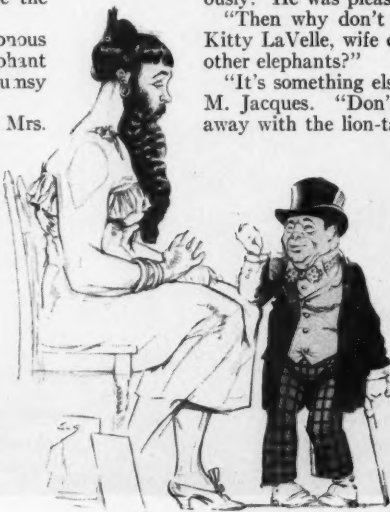
"But that was twenty years ago," declared Mrs. Fisher.

M. Jacques became oracular. He paused a full dramatic moment.

"The elephant," intoned M. Jacques, "never forgets."

Over their heads the shifting monotone broke. They listened breathlessly as heavy feet clumped across the floor. Down the front-hall stairs—clump-clump-clump—went the slow, heavy feet. Huddled together, Mrs. Fisher and her lodgers peeked from behind the curtains as the elephant man reached the street.

A ponderous, slow man. His bulky head hung forward and swayed from side to side. As he lurched forward with massive deliberation, his right arm advanced with his right leg, which is not the way a man walks. His hulking body seemed to grow fantastically larger as he passed



The Dwarf has a tête-à-tête with the Bearded Lady.

Remembers

By Wallace Smith

A New Story
from Mrs. Fisher's
Boarding House

a yellow street lamp and heaved into the soft dark of early night.

"See, Mother Fisher?" whispered Dan Sawtelle. "It was just this Hagermann—and no elephant whatsoever."

But Mrs. Fisher had the hardy suspicion of a veteran landlady. With Hulda, her versatile maid servant, carrying a broom, she ascended to the room of Gustaf Hagermann.

They found no elephant. There was only Hagermann's shoddy suitcase—and two photographs resting on the dresser. One was a snap-shot of Queenie, famous ruler of the Great Dolling Brothers' circus herd of elephants.

The other was a photograph of a girl, a slim, lovely girl adorned and accented in a flagrant circus costume.

Twenty years is a long time in circus history. In less than twenty years, the circus changed from a happy-go-lucky caravan to an involved industry. It traded in the canvas top. It became a polite spectacle with a roof over its head. And, incidentally, with a take—which is to say, a total of admission fees—that would have made the old-time, short-change, ticket-wagon prestidigitator wealthy in a performance. The veteran of the big top will tell you, wistfully, which era he preferred.

The Great Dolling Brothers' Circus had started as a wagon show; it had moved on its own wheels and hoofs from town to town. This was in the day when the prayer of all circus folks was for short hauls and dry lots.

It was after the Dolling street parade in a town in the Wisconsin dairy country that Gustaf Hagermann attached himself to the circus. He was a big man even then, but he had not attained his full growth. He had approached Sam Dolling, who, with his older brother, the astute J. F. Dolling, was watching a gratifying surge of crowds for the afternoon performance.

The brothers were, as a consequence, in high good humor. It pleased them to play with the idea of this bulky farmer as a spangled, prancing circus performer.

"Now, with his shape head, J. F.," said Sam Dolling, "straight up in the back that way, you can figure right off where he's a born piccolo player."

This was a brotherly gibe. J. F. had made his start in the band-wagon.

"With them big mitts of his," retorted J. F., "we'd never have to watch him making change if he was on the ticket-wagon."

And this was a brotherly retort. Sam had made his start—some said, unkindly, that he had bought a whole circus thereby—at the window of the ticket-wagon.

"Why do you want to join out with the circus?" Sam asked Gustaf. "It ain't all parades, y'know, and the band ain't always playing. I mean, it ain't a soft life."

Gustaf Hagermann began a dialectic, earnest stammering. "You ain't stuck on none of the gals, are you?" asked J. F., at random.

A blush as red as a ringmaster's coat smoldered along Gustaf Hagermann's neck and into his ears. He hung his big head.

"Well, I'll be darned!" exclaimed Sam. "I ought to hey-rube you right off the lot."

But he didn't. The Dolling brothers were in too gay a mood that capacity day. Before the night show Gustaf Hagermann was translated from the overalls of the dairy to the resplendent uniform of the circus band.

He had been made a filler-in-with-the-noisy. This is a professional expression. Sometimes musicians are scarce. To impress the public, empty seats of the band-wagon are occupied by men garbed in musician's uniform and armed with formidable instruments. It is their duty to pretend to be adding to the brassy blare. At least, it used to be so.

Such was the first circus job of Gustaf Hagermann. It was remarked from the first that he was a conscientious, if bogus, performer. He blew into the dumb pipes of his gaudy cornet until his thwarted cheeks puffed like toy balloons; until his simple eyes bulged and the veins of his forehead were swollen.

It was also noted, very early, that his gaze always followed the lovely figure of Rosita Martinelli. She was of the Martinelli family of aerialists, fashioned by nature to be cast from trapeze to trapeze, over a trifling net. Blonde and slim and beautiful was Rosita Martinelli. She weighed eighty-seven pounds. Less than a handful for the husky catchers, suspended by their knees from the flying trapezes. In the grand parade Rosita doubled as an Oriental princess riding, canopied, on the lurching back of Queenie. Even in those days Queenie was the ruler of the Dolling herd of elephants—or bulls, as they are called in the circus.

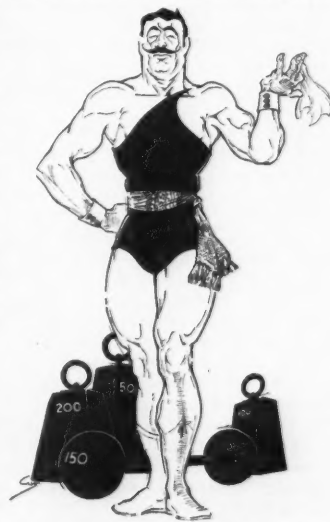
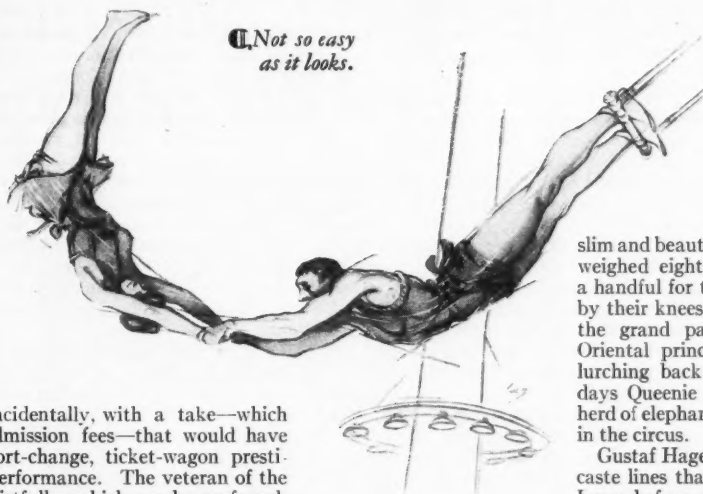
Gustaf Hagermann quickly learned of the caste lines that are drawn on the circus lot. Long before he dreamed of making the attempt, he discovered that it would be unspeakable for a filler-in-with-the-noisy to address such a shooting star as Rosita Martinelli. He was not resentful of the barrier. In his simple, plodding way he set out to overcome it.

As sedulously as he had blown silent hurricanes into the dummy trumpet, as gallantly as a Spaniard courts the duenna who guards his love, Gustaf began to woo Queenie, the elephant. It must have amused Queenie at first. She was a humorous, patient monarch, for all the trembling esteem in which she was held in the herd and in the whole circus.

Queenie may, then, have been just tolerant and amused—at first. But there came an afternoon, just before the grand parade, when Queenie sulked dangerously. The rest of the herd took her cue. They trumpeted defiance of their keepers' commands. They refused to budge from the elephant picket-line.

The bull-master, in charge of the herd, stormed vainly. The brothers Dolling despaired. After all, it is the elephant who makes the circus and the grand parade.

Gustaf Hagermann, smiling propitiation,



clad in a musician's coat and bearing his fraudulent horn, approached Sam Dolling at the picket-line. As he approached, Queenie squealed a little giggle of delight and reached out a sinuous welcome with her mighty trunk.

"Look out there, Gust!" shouted Sam. "That bull's temper-mental today!"

Gust stood in easy range of Queenie's trunk. "Ach, Queenie!" said Gust. "Ain't you ashamed yet to behave so?"

The bull-master rushed forward to snatch the simple filler-in-with-the-noisy from the perilous spot. Queenie's trunk slapped the bull-master to the ground. Gust stood unharmed—and sternly reproachful.

"Ain't you ashamed, Queenie? Big-pig-dog what you are!"

Sam Dolling gasped. Queenie, despot of the circus, had dropped her ponderous head in shame. For all the world like a scolded puppy. More abject than that, she loosened the hinges of her columnar legs and groveled.

"Good Queenie," said Gust. "And now you want it, maybe, Gust should tickle the ribs?"

Queenie rolled up a single ecstatic eye. Gust took the flattened bull-master's goad, the elephant hook. With its stout length he thwacked the sides of the begging elephant. Queenie squealed her delight. Slowly she got to her feet and did a double shuffle of humble excitement. Like a scolded puppy, quick to accept forgiveness.

"Now, make such a parade," Gust instructed her. "And afterwards, maybe, it gives pfeffermints drops."

He turned and handed the goad to the still dazed bull-master. Sam Dolling stepped forward briskly.

"Why didn't you tell me you understood bulls?" he demanded.

"From elephants I know nothing," responded Gustaf, "but from human nature I know very good."

Sam took the goad from the bull-master's hands and handed it to Gustaf.

"You're promoted," he said. "You lead Queenie in the parade."

That afternoon Gust Hagermann, wearing a sultan's turban, marched with Queenie. Queenie marched at the head of the elephants. Never once that afternoon did Gust dare look up at the canopied back, where Rosita Martinelli rode, an Oriental and disdainful princess.

He was still far beneath her—by the code of the big top as well as by the height of Queenie, who was fairly a giantess. But no longer was he blowing the music of his love from far across the stretch of the arena—through a mute and futile trumpet.

YET not forever can a princess, however disdainful she may be and however tall the elephant, look down upon her faithful mahout.

Also, it is hardly conceivable that a man who understood human nature sufficiently to subdue a naughty elephant would not make as patient an effort to win the regard of a flying trapezist. Slowly Gust became accepted by the circus folk as one who belonged.

In little ways Gustaf wooed Rosita Martinelli. When she rode Queenie, the jungle giantess fell into a smooth gait that permitted the princess to accept the applause of the crowds without danger of being jolted out from under the canopy. Instead of scrambling down Queenie's side, she waited until the turbaned Gustaf commanded Queenie to kneel, that she might descend in regal ease.

After a while Gustaf suggested, as an added thrill for the crowd, that Rosita permit Queenie to put her trunk around Rosita's waist. Rosita refused. It was a reasonable refusal, considering the menace of Queenie's caresses.

It seemed, though, almost as if she had repelled an embrace from Gustaf himself. He must have been disappointed, but his smile still was patient—and more placid than a man's smile should be, whose first overt gesture of love is repelled.

In little ways, then, Gustaf advanced. In such little ways as a man may offer whose medium is the largest elephant in captivity. It lasted all through that season.

The elephant man's patient courtship did not escape the shrewd, kindly eyes of the circus folks. They smiled. People always smiled over Gustaf—at first. Yet when Rosita announced her engagement to the elephant man, they were scandalized.

There was not only the old question of caste. Gustaf was not a real performer, after all. And she was of the acrobatic aristocracy! There was still another reason. Captain Lionel, the lion-tamer!

During the performance after Rosita's calm, disquieting announcement Captain Lionel's big cats were more than tamed. They were bullied and cowed under the fierce mood of the man

who dared enter their cage armed only with a riding-whip. During that performance Captain Lionel's act of inserting his head between the jaws of Nero, biggest of the lions, seemed a cordial invitation.

Sam Dolling watched the cat act, more excited and fearful than the audience. He was perspiring coldly when Captain Lionel's black, moody head emerged again.

"He's got no right carrying on that way," complained Sam to J. F. "A trouser should ought to keep his private affairs out of the arena."

"Well, you got to remember," said J. F. tolerantly, "where the whole show thought Lionel was going to marry Rosita himself."

"Especially Lionel figured that way," returned Sam. "He figured Rosita for a cinch, the big fathead. That's the whole trouble. No dame likes to be pegged for a set-up."

"We done it ourself," J. F. reminded his brother. "We should've thrum Elephant Gust often the lot that first day."

"Say, lay off Gust," replied Sam. "He's all right. Making Queenie act like a lady is just as tough as going in there playing tag with them lions."

THEY both sighed as Captain Lionel, savage and contemptuous in tights and a leopard skin, concluded and made ready to quit the snarling cage. At the cage door, he deliberately turned back and dealt Nero a vicious kick in the hindquarters.

"That's what love will do to a good showman," mourned Sam.

"He can't kick Nero and get away with it," muttered J. F. "Them cats belong to us—not to that big fathead."

Among the performers the gossip was whispered. The whispering was a delicate consideration for the shame of the Martinelli family. Barney Martinelli, nominal father of the act, was said to have threatened disowning his professional daughter.

"She can't hook up with no mere bull-shover and stay in the act," Barney was supposed to have said. "It ain't like if he was a trainer. He's nothing but a stable-hand for a bull—a one-elephant man."

In the tent of the circus freaks there was no reserve shown in the face of the sorrow of the Martinellis. The performers were on another social plane from the freaks. The living skeleton, the dwarf and the human pincushion chortled over the dismay of the exalted stratum of the circus world.

"Only they needn't get so worked up and haughty about it," declared Mme. Evangelica, the Bearded Lady. "Rosita ain't going to wed this Elephant Gust." Mme. Evangelica's words commanded the respect of the other freaks. To her, they ascribed the conventional feminine intuition in such matters. And her whiskers gave her words the weight of measured judgment which is supposed to be the attribute of masculinity. "She's just pretending to be engaged to Elephant Gust so's to burn up Lionel. He's been too sure of Rosita. And he's been upstage ever since he got that offer to show in Europe this winter. She's just learning him a lesson. She'll make him fall for her like she falls into that big net out there—only not so soft."

"But how about poor Gust?" asked the Living Skeleton.

"Gust will find out," said Mme. Evangelica, "where elephants ain't women."

"That sounds to me," stated Miss Lolo, the wild girl from Fiji, "like a dirty crack at us dames."

"I only mean, dearie," replied Mme. Evangelica, combing her beard, "that you can guess sometimes how a elephant will act."

Just before the show went into winter quarters, the long-whiskered, feminine prophecy of Mme. Evangelica was fulfilled.

Captain Lionel, after a stormy scene with J. F. Dolling over his brutal behavior in the cage, left the circus. Not until the next town was reached, and Queenie knelt for the mounting of the Oriental princess, was it discovered that Rosita Martinelli had been guilty of the unforgivable treason. She had quit the show without notice. She had joined Captain Lionel, of course. Later came the news of their marriage and her departure with the lion-tamer for his European engagement.

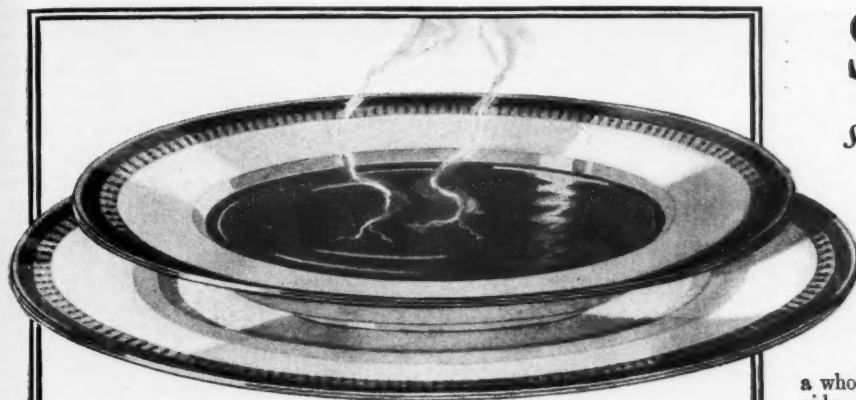
That was later. While the sensation of their disappearance still stirred the sawdust, Sam Dolling went to Elephant Gust. He found Gust standing, stonily despondent, beside Queenie.

"You'll stay with the show, Gust?" asked Sam anxiously.

"She iss gone," said Gust. "It gives no use."

"But what about Queenie?"

As Sam asked the question Queenie's trunk moved out in graceful supplication and coiled, consoling, about the dejected figure of Elephant Gust. The elephant man opened his lips twice before he could speak. "I stay," said Gust, "for Queenie." "Elephants is best." Sam's relief was jubilant. "Some



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And, finally, the clear soups—those dainty but invigorating blends, such as Consomme, Bouillon, Julienne and Printanier! How enticing to the appetite either for the formal luncheon and dinner or many of the regular family meals!

WITH THE MEAL OR AS A MEAL SOUP BELONGS IN THE DAILY DIET!

day they will come back," Gust added. "We will be waiting, me and Queenie. The elephant never forgets."

They waited twenty years, Elephant Gust and Queenie. Twenty years, which is so long a time in the history of the circus, is a long time, as well, for a memory. Too long.

Lionel and Rosita remained in Europe. Circus folks came to believe that they were afraid of Elephant Gust.

Elephant Gust grew to be a legend. The legend became more impressive because it stalked in the pageant of daily routine; and because it had to do with elephants.

There were black tales of how, in winter quarters, Elephant Gust plotted with Queenie for the act of vengeance. How, with a dummy figure, dressed in leopard skin, he trained her to crush out the life of the man he would fling at her feet.

Sam Dolling had a talk with Elephant Gust about that. No one else, save possibly J. F., ever learned what was said at that conference. But after that, it was darkly observed, Queenie's performance in the ring always omitted stepping over the recumbent body of a trainer.

"But we can't fire Gust," insisted Sam to J. F., "without breaking up the elephant herd. He's got a job as long as Queenie is alive."

"Elephants live a long time," remarked J. F. "Yeah; and Queenie's got her health," responded Sam. "But we can't afford to give Gust the air."

"I only hope," said J. F., "that Lionel and Rosie never come back to this country."

"It's funny," mused Sam. "He's still daffy about her. Don't blame her whatever."

Elephant Gust finally and reluctantly became an arena performer. Queenie insisted on it. She refused to go into the ring without him. She held the whole herd in an elephantine strike until her wish was carried out.

Elephant Gust did not relish the arena. Not that it meant new work. He just stood there. Without a word from him, Queenie went through her stunts. He was glad to get back to the picket-line with her.

He slept in the straw beside Queenie. He brought his meals to the picket-line and ate after pitchforking her rations to her.

"I wouldn't be surprised," commented J. F. sardonically, "to see him scoffing hay with Queenie."

This casual remark also came to be part of the legend. It was believed that Elephant Gust ate hay and that he could down a sack of peanuts with the shells on.

Elephant Gust grew more and more silent. His always bulky figure grew to enormous proportions. He had acquired the habit of rocking on his feet in the manner of elephants. In rare moments of outward emotion he forgot words—and trumpeted.

It got so that on nights when there was an unusual disturbance along the elephant line, the other performers would ascribe it to Elephant Gust.

"He's remembering Rosita," they would say. "He ain't forgot. Elephants never forget."

Before the Dolling boys combined with two other circuses and hoisted their red-and-gilt wagons ingloriously onto flat cars, there were some gay passages in the legend of Elephant Gust and Queenie. For a while the elephant man turned to stolid dissipation.

He would wait until the wagons were moving to the next town. It would be after midnight. Accompanied by Queenie, he would go to some saloon in the village. Queenie would wait outside while Gust sowed his mild wild oats. It would be near dawn when he came out.

Queenie would lift him with her trunk and steady him on her thick, sympathetic skull. Then they would be off at a wild speed to overtake the circus.

Next morning Queenie would be at her place, fondly standing guard over him.

Twenty years of circus history . . .

When Sam Dolling heard that Captain Lionel and Rosita were coming back, he waited to see how things went.

Perhaps Gust would not hear of the return.

Two evenings later, though, there was a melancholy trumpeting chorus from the elephant line. And the next day Elephant Gust asked for leave of absence. Or, rather, he announced that he was going away for a while. In vain Sam Dolling argued with the big man. Gust listened without a change of expression.

"The elephant remembers," he said simply, when Sam was exhausted.

In desperation, Sam made his ultimate appeal. "But how can you leave Queenie?"

"I have told Queenie," said Elephant Gust. "Queenie understands."

When Elephant Gust had left the lot Sam Dolling posted a guard of three men near the elephant line. He reminded them of Elephant Gust's rehearsals with the dummy.

"Watch night and day," ordered Sam. "If he comes back with Lionel, stop him."

Elephant Gust went to Mrs. Fisher's boarding-house, as if by inevitable instinct. There he waited, rocking on his clumsy feet. And once there had come from him the jungle cry of sorrow—and revenge!

It was Hulda who was blamed for the final, fatal scene in Mrs. Fisher's boarding-house. Mrs. Fisher had gone to market early that day. Hulda had admitted the couple and had shown them to a room on the second floor. Mrs. Fisher was horrified when she returned.

"Gosh, how could I tell it was them?" protested Hulda tearfully. "She certainly don't look like her pitcher!"

"Do you want a murder on our hands?" cried Mrs. Fisher. "What'll the perfession say? They'll say Mother Fisher lets her guests get murdered. They'll simply have to get out. I'll tell 'em so myself—right away!"

She went up the stairs and with scant ceremony entered the room of the new arrivals.

Captain Lionel had just taken a costume from one of the big, foreign-labeled suitcases and was trying it on. His uniform.

"You'll have to get out!" said Mrs. Fisher.

"Well, I like that," replied Rosita. "What kind of a joint is this anyway?"

"Listen!" whispered Mrs. Fisher.

From over their heads came the monotonous shifting of heavy feet. Lionel, still in his leopard skin, went pale.

"It's a elephant!" he gasped.

"It's worse," hissed Mrs. Fisher. "It's the man who acts like a elephant. It's Elephant Gust—and he's been waiting for you!"

Lionel, in a panic, was stuffing odds and ends back into the suitcase. "You got me into this!" His voice had a sob in it. "You dragged me back—to get killed."

Rosita did not move. Mrs. Fisher noted, though, that she was suddenly white. But her voice was harshly determined.

"Drop that suitcase, you big quitter!" she ordered. "And shut up."

"But, darling heart!" protested Lionel.

"Don't darling me, you cat-beater!" shrielled Rosita.

"We're going to stay and have it out with Elephant Gust once and for all. No mere bull-shover is going to scare me from now on. If you're afraid—run! I'm sticking."

Then it sounded—the death-cry of the monarch of the jungle. The whole house trembled with the fury of it.

Lionel squeaked like a rat and leaped for the door. Rosita stumbled back against the bed.

Then—clump-clump-clump. Heavy feet descending the stairs. Clump-clump. The steps came toward the door of the room. The door-knob turned slowly and the door moved back.

Into the room came the man who was like an elephant. His great body rocked. His little eyes, red and beady, contemplated the tableau before him. Lionel, terrorized, crouching back against Rosita. Rosita, white and cold, facing him, a frozen smile on her lips.

His right arm went feeling toward them. For all the world like an elephant's trunk. Rosita tried to scream, but no sound came.

The groping arm halted. The elephant man was remembering. But, apparently, having some difficulty about it.

He remembered Lionel. The leopard skin made that simple enough. Lionel's proud black mane had changed. There was a large bald spot on top of his head. The remaining hair surrounded it like stringy black petals. Lionel's face was lined—not with the stern etching of his calling but with the tired lines of a long thralldom. His shoulders were hunched in a habit of fear. His whipped eyes, even in this moment of terror, went abjectly to Rosita.

"Hit him!" she commanded. "Be a man, you poor worm. Hit him!"

Lionel moaned. But the fear of her was superior to the fear of the elephant man and the waiting disaster. Like a clumsy somnambulist, he moved toward Elephant Gust.

"I was scared stiff," Mrs. Fisher related afterwards, "but I couldn't help thinking of that gag of Bert Coons about the henpecked lion-tamer. You know that gag where the lion-tamer tried to get away from his wife's nagging and so he hides in the cage with his lions. And she finds him there and says: 'You coward!' Yes, sir, I kept thinking of that."

Elephant Gust's red, beady eyes remained on Rosita. He did not glance at Lionel. When the lion-tamer was within range, his right arm went out with massive precision and struck Lionel to the floor.

"You are Rosita—my Rosita?" asked the elephant man.

Rosita's lips worked into a grimace. "Yes, Gust dear"—she managed an almost coquetish air—"don't you remember?"

The elephant had remembered. But his memory had to do with the slim blond trapezist. It had to do with the dainty, disdainful Oriental princess.

The elephant man snorted.

Time had done a caricaturist's malicious tricks with Rosita. She had not grown taller. But she had grown. Tremendously. Her figure bulged in humorous distortions. Her eyes, that had been so blue, were faded and lost in pouches. Just then her face was bloodless and smudges of rouge across her sagging cheeks accented their coarseness.

Time, the merciless cartoonist, had sketched an exaggerated shrew. She was, by all caricaturist tradition, the companion of the brow-beaten, henpecked lion-tamer.

Elephant Gust's right arm went toward her again, slowly, unbelieving. Rosita screamed.

Elephant Gust shook his heavy head. He was rocking on his feet again and his little eyes were twinkling now. Exactly as Queenie's eyes gleamed in her waggish moments.

"The elephant has remembered," said the elephant man. "But he has been remembering the wrong thing."

Without another glance he left the room. When he was out of the house Mrs. Fisher went again to the elephant man's room. Below her, the shrill voice of Rosita was shouting bitterly at Lionel, the lion-tamer. On the floor, Mrs. Fisher found the photograph of the slim Oriental princess savagely torn to bits.

The boss of the guard that Sam Dolling had left near the elephant line reported to his chief.

"Elephant Gust is back on the lot," he said.

Sam jumped to his feet. "Did you grab him?" he demanded. "Has he got Lionel?"

The guard smiled curiously. "Elephant Gust ain't hostile, at all," he explained. "He come in, making them funny noises like a elephant makes when he's feeling good. He slaps Queenie and whispers in her ear. I think that bull understands what Gust says."

"I know she does," said Sam. "What then?"

"Oh, nothing," replied the guard, "only he brings out this dummy with the leopard skin on it and burns it in a little bonfire. Him and Queenie stand there watching the fire. They're both rocking and eating these pfeffermints drops, like Gust calls 'em. I think—"

He was interrupted by a sudden outbreak on the elephant line. A furore of trumpeting and squealing. A high, hilarious blast.

Sam grinned. "I don't know what the joke is," he said. "But that noise you hear is the elephant way of laughing."



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FELS-NAPTHA
THE GOLDEN BAR WITH THE CLEAN NAPTHA ODOR

Dark Dawn by Martha Ostenso (Continued from page 101)

if she says she'll have you—how long do you intend to stay?"

"As long as she needs me."

"Do you know—"

"I know how serious it is. I know what I'm doing, too. Take me with you."

In the end, Karen accompanied Muller on his visit. For the past three days Mrs. Blundell had been doing her "poor best" for the sick woman and her two men-folk. Hattie had opposed the suggestion that a competent nurse should be brought down from Lost River to look after her. She insisted that she would be all right in a few days. All she needed was a little rest—and a little friendly attention. She would have no strangers about her place. Muller had given in to her for the present. She would learn soon enough just how serious her condition was.

On the way out from town, Muller was very silent, as was his wont on lonely journeys along the prairie roads. Why in thunder, he was thinking, couldn't young Karen have kept herself out of this? There was going to be enough talk anyhow. What was her object? Was she going to become a sacrifice, too? Hadn't Hattie Murker ruined lives enough without this?

He suddenly became impatient with himself. What a sentimental old fool he was! Why should he be interested in people's motives? Come on—Sodom—Gomorrah!

Lucian came up from the barn as they drove into the yard. With a nervousness for which he inwardly cursed himself, Muller got down from his buggy and began to pull off his gloves. He didn't want to see these two meet—Lucian and Karen. He could have run away and left them to themselves. But Lucian was beside him now and Muller saw him turn a blank face to the girl.

"I've brought Carrie along, Luce," he explained. "She wants to lend a hand with Hattie—until—well, until we find it necessary to get a nurse."

Lucian nodded half-heedingly, scarcely glancing at Karen. Muller did not fail to notice the blood burning in the girl's cheeks. He stumbled on in confusion.

"Mrs. Blundell won't be able to stay long, you know. And Carrie is willing to give us all her time. She can run across the fields there once in a while and take a peek in to see that old Peter is all right. Eh, Luce?"

Lucian nodded again, absent-mindedly. Muller took him by the arm and led the way to the house. Glancing back at Karen where she remained seated in the buggy, he saw that her head was high, her face averted.

One of the images that Muller was always to hold in memory, stark and pure as a sculptor's dream of the unheaven marble, was the face of Hattie Dorrit as he announced to her Karen's wish. A strange gleam appeared for a moment in the cold, stony eyes and then, with lips that barely moved, she whispered:

"Karen is a good girl. Send her in. I can trust her. Tell her."

It was more than Muller had expected, far more. He turned away and left the room. When he came back a few minutes later with Karen, he paced softly up and down the hall while the girl went in to Hattie. Karen flushed crimson at the look the woman gave her.

"Karen!" Hattie said feelingly. "It was nice of you to come. You're going to stay?"

"Yes, Hattie."

Hattie smiled, her eyes upon Karen's face. "You're a sweet, pure girl, Karen," she whispered jerkily. "I—I can trust you. I know I can. I won't have a strange woman in the house. I want to know what's going on while I'm here. I want someone I can trust."

Presently Karen turned away and went down-stairs while Muller completed his visit. Mrs. Blundell was busying herself with the midday meal, but Karen gave her no thought. Her meeting with Hattie lay like a weight upon her heart. There had been something so forlorn

and yet so tenaciously wilful, so dominating and yet so sordidly cognizant of the fundamental change that had taken place within that gray stone house, something so repellent, too, in that hint of mistrust coming from one who had but a day or two before been within the very bosom of death, that Karen had come away from her presence actually ill.

With a feeling that she was committing herself to an indefinite term of voluntary imprisonment, she moved to the window and looked out at the clear sky and the naked fields and the brown weeds shivering under the cold wind. From the kitchen came the thin, colorless voice of Bert Murker.

Karen Strand had been at the beck and call of Hattie for three days before Lucian Dorrit seemed to take any notice of her presence.

During those three days Lucian had gone about the house like a man walking in his sleep. He had scarcely eaten. With the coming of darkness he had gone out into the fields and had walked about by himself until long after everyone in the house had gone to sleep. He spoke to no one, saw no one, heeded no one's questions. Karen, proud and aloof at first, found herself at the end of that third day disturbed over his conduct and appearance.

She had striven to keep herself from speculating on the particulars of Hattie's accident. Her first fear—that she herself might have been in some way involved in a quarrel that had led to the disaster—had been quickly dissipated by the welcome Hattie had given her. She had even begun to believe that Hattie's misfortune had come upon her accidentally, as rumor had it. And yet the look on Lucian's face made her guess at terrible, impossible things.

She reminded herself many times a day that she had come there for Hattie's sake, and for Hattie's alone. Hattie was her whole concern. She set her mind sternly against brooding over Lucian. She could not forget, at times, the lawless feeling she had had for him, but she would tear that out of her heart now. The ordeal of being in the house with him and caring for the woman who was now helplessly dependent upon them both would, she told herself wretchedly, bring forgetfulness. But whenever she caught a glimpse of his haggard face her heart ached for him in spite of herself. It was only her manifold duties that kept her from feeling utterly crushed by the pall that hung over the stone house.

Karen had tried, too, to keep from unrolling before her mind the black years of despair which were to be Lucian's. She had tried to tell herself that perhaps Muller and the doctor he had brought from Lost River were wrong—that Hattie would not have to lie, like so much dead wood flat on her back for the rest of her life. The thought overwhelmed Karen. It could not be that Lucian Dorrit, the Lucian she had known as an odd, smiling, whistling boy, long-legged and shy, should be united forever with a woman whom he did not love, with a mere body in which life had paused like a mocking ghost on the threshold of death.

On the evening of that third day, she had made supper for Bert and Lucian and had sat at the table with them. Lucian had drunk a cup of tea and had gone out again at once, leaving his food untouched.

Hours later, when Karen came down from Hattie's room, Lucian entered the kitchen. He stood stock-still, as though beholding her there, in his wife's house, for the first time.

Except for Hattie, they were alone in the house, Bert having gone to Loyola to escape the enforced quiet of the place.

Lucian's eyes narrowed as he looked at Karen. "You're here, eh?"

His words were a harsh sneer, uttered from twisted lips. Karen's heart seemed to stop a beat and then began to throb. Never in all her life had she seen so black a look on any human face. She stared at him, fascinated.

"Yes, Lucian—I'm here," she echoed. It

seemed to her that her words issued from a void. She sat down wearily upon a chair near the table, her eyes still upon Lucian.

He came slowly across the floor and stood looking down at her. "Don't you know better than to come here?" he demanded. "A little innocent like you! Don't you know this house is cursed? You'd better get back home!"

Karen lifted her face with a courageous smile. "Lucian—what's the matter? What has happened to you? Can't you tell me, please? You have changed—so terribly, Luce. Is there something you can't tell me?"

She was pleading with him, but he laughed suddenly, a startling, ugly laugh.

"Didn't I tell you this house is cursed?" he replied. "Isn't that enough for you. What else do you want to know?"

She became bold suddenly. "I want to know what has happened, Luce, to change you so," she told him.

He stooped above her, but she did not move. "So you want to know that, do you?" he demanded harshly. "Well, I'll tell you. I'll tell you. You've heard them tell what happened here, eh? Well, it's all lies, lies. I—I drove her out to the quarry that night. I crippled her for the rest of her life. Now you've got it straight. And now—maybe you'll get back home—and stay there!"

He was swaying, as he spoke, like a drunken man. Karen flung the back of her hand against her mouth to keep from crying out. For many seconds they remained staring at each other, horror and pain in one face, in the other a sardonic, senseless brutality. And then, suddenly, without a word, Lucian made his erratic, unseeing way out of the house.

"I never saw the like," Mrs. Blundell declared triumphantly over a cup of tea at Mrs. Tingley's. "You'd swear Carrie Strand was Hattie's own daughter, or sister, or something, the way that girl waits on her. And it just seems that Hattie can't say enough for her, she's that nice about it all. But Luce! Him and Carrie don't speak. One don't even let on they know the other is there. It got kind o' late and I stayed for supper. Hattie and Luce have been at my place often enough, says I to myself—why shouldn't I stay and see what's really going on here, anyhow? And with a young girl like that in a house with a crippled woman and two men, I thought it wasn't more'n my duty to see that everything was—well, you know. And all through the meal they never even looked at each other."

Mrs. Blundell slapped the palm of her hand smartly down on the table as she spoke.

"Do you think it—it might have been just put on?" Mrs. Tingley ventured.

"No, sir!"

There might have been a faint hint of disappointment in the denial. Mrs. Tingley murmured approvingly.

"I'm quite sure of it," Mrs. Blundell went on emphatically. "You could just feel the hate between them two. Whenever Luce opened his mouth to say something to me—and that wasn't often, he's got that grumpy and sour—Carrie would just freeze tight and look as though she didn't hear. And then when she'd talk to me, he'd clear his throat and twist his mouth on one side and make a lot of noise with his knife and fork. I never seen anything like it. And that Bert—he just kept lookin' from one to the other of 'em, sort o' scared like."

"I tell you—it made me feel funny, the whole business. Hattie is the only one in that house that seems happy and natural. Luce looks like the devil's after him, and thin as a rail, and old—it's a pity, how he looks! And that Strand girl—she's just all gone to eyes, and there's something so stiff and quiet about her—you know the way a person looks at a wake?"

Mrs. Blundell had reported more or less precisely the actual state of affairs in the Murker



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102

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house. Imprisoned in that inescapable intimacy which only a winter-bound house can create, the four souls who dwelt within those stone walls on the Murker hill led an extraordinary life. Sometimes it occurred to Karen that they had possibly all died and that this was some fantastic bourn of the hereafter where souls are united in a sham propinquity more horrible than any earth-loneliness. Occasionally she escaped to spend a few hours with her father. She would return at nightfall then, her courage restored, to care for the invalid in the stone house and to bear with the irascibility of Luc'an and the vagaries of Bert.

Outwardly, at least, Hattie's growing devotion to Karen seemed genuine enough. There were times, however, when Karen was puzzled. As Hattie recovered from the immediate effects of her misfortune, she began, with a resoluteness that was at once appalling and pathetic, to ignore the fact of her paralysis, and to assume her former self-sufficiency. She contrived artfully to make her own helplessness a new basis for her control of the affairs on the farm.

She ruled despotically, from the minutest detail in the running of the house to the most important business transaction in the managing of the farm. Every day, for a few minutes, Lucian talked with her in her room, as a hiring might talk with his employer, reporting precisely what had occurred on the land that was hers, and among the live stock that was hers. He gave her an accounting, to the dollar, of how he handled the money that was hers. He was courteous, even gentle with her, in a lost sort of way, and in return she smiled faintly, fully aware of her authority.

In one respect, however, she assumed no self-sufficiency. She must have the company of Karen Strand. It satisfied her yearning for an affection that was otherwise denied her, her manner insinuated, always a little pathetically.

On evenings when Lucian was in Loyola and Bert already in bed, Karen read to her for an hour or two. Hattie was wont to protest mildly, always solicitous of Karen's health. "There now, Carrie, you've read enough. Just sit quiet a while."

"I'm not tired, Hattie."

Hattie's smile was motherly. "We don't know when we are overdoing ourselves, Carrie. We have to pay for our foolishness, don't we? Look at me. I was that headstrong, I had to go up on Blacksnake and look for that horse. But I was never one that could stand the thought of a beast being hurt. I'm that soft."

Loyola and the district had finally accepted that explanation of her accident. Hattie, moreover, was apparently anxious to shield Lucian. Her solicitude there was a constant puzzle to Karen. The girl was too young, too ingenuous to grasp at once Hattie's design.

One evening, however, when Karen had laid her book aside, Hattie with a faint gesture of her hand said a thing which left Karen stunned.

"I wonder where Luce is tonight," she murmured pensively.

"He and Bert went to Loyola together," Karen told her.

"I know—I know," Hattie replied. "I s'pose he is paying one of his visits to Nan Miracle tonight."

In her voice there was no malice whatever. She might have been making an observation about the lamp on the table.

Karen choked suddenly, and then flushed with fear that Hattie had noticed the catch in her breath. But Hattie's eyes were dreamingly on the wall beyond the foot of her bed.

"Oh, no—not that, Hattie!" Karen breathed, striving to keep the ridiculous panic out of her voice.

Hattie smiled patronizingly. "You're young, Carrie, and innocent," she sighed. "You have a lot to learn—about men. A lot that I hope you will never have to learn. It's their way. They can't help it. We hope for better things—for a while even I hoped for better things—from my Luce. God gives us strength to bear such things, Carrie. Weak as I am, I have somehow been given strength now to bear

anything, to forgive anything. After all, Luce doesn't try to deceive me. I have that to be thankful for. God sends us trials to make—ah-h—"

She closed her eyes with a sharp drawing together of her brows, and her hand fluttered to the counterpane over her heart. Karen, always frightened at these sudden pains which attacked Hattie, hurried for the medicine bottles on the table. Restored by the drug, Hattie touched Karen's hand and said, her voice strangely tense:

"Promise me you'll stay with me, Carrie. Promise not to go home."

Karen suddenly had a curious feeling of fright. It was as though the lock of the door had suddenly clicked, trapping her in this room. But then, looking at Hattie, she reproached herself.

Almost before she had formed the words in her mind, she said, "I'll stay—until spring, Hattie. Father may need me then."

A few minutes later Hattie was breathing quietly, and Karen heard her murmur the "good night" which meant her dismissal. She blew out the light, and on her way from the room paused for a moment and looked out of the window toward Loyola. Under the cold night stars she could see the glow of a lamp down near the railroad track. Karen felt suddenly sick.

People about Loyola remarked upon the fact that it was a winter very much like the one following Lucian Dorrit's and Hattie Murker's marriage. The siege of the cold persisted weeks on end, reducing all endeavor to the dingy human business of keeping warm. Christmas, New Year's, came like wanly festive spirits into a frozen world, and were gone again.

Early in January Hattie had a serious heart attack which necessitated Karen's telephoning for Muller. Karen, Lucian and Bert remained in the kitchen until Muller came down from Hattie's room. Karen was nervously stirring the contents of a saucepan on the stove; Lucian sat enveloped in his usual dark moroseness. It was Bert, curiously enough, who was alertly anxious, his half-moon eyes watching intently until the doctor appeared.

Muller drew up a chair and talked in a low tone to Lucian. Bert scuttled up like some grotesque, eager animal, and stood listening to what Muller had to say.

"I've expected something like this, Luce," the doctor said. "I've been waiting for it. We've got to be careful now. Any severe shock would be a very serious thing. Her heart wouldn't stand it, that's all. She's got to have absolute quiet."

It was Bert who spoke first, in a queer, reedy voice. "Do—d'ye mean she might die on us? I th-thought you said she was goin' to live, Doc. You said—"

Muller turned a dry look upon the quavering Bert. "There's no reason why she shouldn't, with the proper care," he said, and rose to take his leave.

"She'll get it, Muller," Luce said shortly.

Karen stared at Muller as he made his way to the door, and the doctor, seeing her eyes, felt himself suddenly age by years.

Even Lucian, in his self-absorption, observed that for the rest of the day Bert bore the harassed look of one acutely conscious of impending disaster.

During the following week Bert applied himself assiduously to pleasing Hattie, running with large, catlike quiet up and down the stairs all day long, devising delicate means for his sister's increased comfort that amazed Karen. Hattie, supremely at her ease in her consciousness of complete power, enjoyed this tribute to her own importance even while she knew Bert too well to believe that his devotion was unselfish. Bert, in his slow, circumambient way, had a motive for everything he did.

On an afternoon when Karen was at home with Peter Strand, and Lucian was at work outside, Hattie became aware of what that motive was. Her unfortunate brother, seated at her bedside, broke down and wept with

genuine terror at the prospect of being left, in the event of her death, to the mercies of a man who hated him. He had never doubted Lucian's hatred for him. Hattie, faintly amused, faintly contemptuous, as she was of all human frailty in which she did not share, touched, too, by her brother's evident distress, smiled at him reassuringly and told him to fetch Blundell on the morrow. Bert Murker should become a landowner in his own right.

If Bert had hitherto been difficult for Luce and Karen to bear with, he now became insufferable. The half-section of land which Hattie deeded over to him puffed his vanity to bursting. Karen and Lucian, who had remained as frigidly unaware of each other as if they had been utter strangers, now found a common irritation in Bert.

He affected magnanimous gestures, made bold promises to buy "somethin' purty" for Karen when he next went to Lost River, and even included Lucian in his smug overtures. Involuntarily, at such times, the girl's eyes sought Lucian's and would meet there, before she drew her own glance away, an expression of sympathetic, half-amused annoyance. Both, however, guardedly preserved their resentment that they had been brought thus unwillingly together in their disgust for Hattie's brother.

Bert, emboldened now to ask for it, secured Hattie's permission to play the organ in the evenings. Night after night his idiotic fingering of the keys drove Lucian out into the cold fields or down into Loyola, almost in a frenzy.

"Peter, Peter, Pumpkin eater—"

Bert never wearied of the tune, once he had discovered the keys which made it.

Karen sought the inadequate refuge of the kitchen. Hattie always smiled whenever she spoke of Bert's pastime. She even took pains to assure Lucian that it was her wish that her brother should play the organ if it gave him pleasure. Poor Bert—he had so few pleasures in life!

Bert however, had suddenly awakened to the fact that there were pleasures in life which might yet be his, if he but used a little wit. Other men had seized them—and they had not had a half-section of land to their credit. Why should not he?

He began, timidly at first, but with increasing boldness, to force his attentions upon Karen. Whenever the situation became almost intolerable, so unwholesome it was, Karen would have protested to Lucian had she not feared that he would tell her bluntly to go home where she belonged.

Lucian, for his part, sunk in the depths of his own bitterness, was wholly unaware of what was going on in Bert's mind. If he ever became aware of Karen, it was to wish that the girl would go home and stay there.

The intense cold did not prevent Lucian from taking long walks across country at night over the open stretches of hard snow. Out on that white waste of rolling drifts, it seemed possible to disentangle oneself from life's complexities.

He was winning a kind of content, would have won it complete, indeed, if it were not for the presence of Karen Strand in the house. Her cool detachment, her veiled contempt infuriated him. The little fool! What right had she to judge him? What did she know of him from the scant bit of the truth that he had given her? Could she not see the ugly meaning that lay behind Hattie's professed affection for her? Did she not know that Hattie was simply having her way again? Or was Karen acting now from sheer spite toward him?

Returning home later than usual one night, he saw that the lamp in the kitchen was still lighted, although the rest of the house was in darkness. He opened the door and halted before a scene that stopped the breath in his throat. Karen had retreated into the corner between the stove and the wall. Bert was advancing toward her, his flabby hands outstretched in a horrible attitude half of diffidence, half threat. In two strides Luce was beside him. He gripped Bert's arm, and flung him back toward the table. Bert swung about, spluttering incoherent rage and fear.



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A new slant on pipe-smoking contentment is brought to light by Mr. W. H. Doughty, a furniture dealer of Greenville, Tenn. Read what he writes:

Larus & Bro. Co., Richmond, Va.
My dear Sirs:

For twenty years I have been engaged in retailing furniture. On rainy days my partner and I call up some of our friends and invite them down to a little poker game.

In this melange of our selection there happened to be a fellow by the name of Austine—a tobacco dealer. This fellow Austine was a most consistent loser—but losing never seemed to affect his morale.

His conduct became a study with me. My winning and losing moods were reflected in my actions. When winning I was the good fellow. When losing I was the grooch. All this time I noticed Mr. Austine, the tobacco dealer, sitting back unperturbed, pulling away on his pipe—contented—winning or losing.

Finally I put the matter up to Mr. Austine for a solution. He said, "Major (my poker title by brevet), there is no mystery to that—my contentment is due to the tobacco I smoke. When I need a friend in poker or business—Edgeworth has never failed me. It carries contentment in every draw—whether the cards run good or bad."

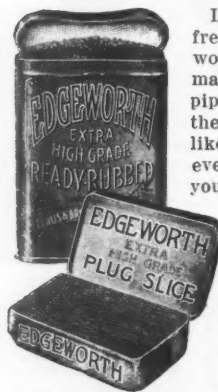
The next time I visited the Mason Corner Tobacco Shop I purchased some of this Edgeworth. It has made a new man out of me. I can look them in the face and smile—smile whether they run good or bad.

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[On your radio—tune in on WRVA, Richmond, Va.—the Edgeworth station. Wave length 256 meters.]

"Shut up!" Lucian snapped. "Get upstairs to bed!"

Bert, whimpering to himself, turned away and shuffled toward the stairs. Lucian watched him until he had vanished, his pulses beating like hot lead in his veins. Then he turned to Karen.

For a long time he stood looking at her intently in silence. She had averted her face so that her head was pressed against the wall. A tear had trickled out of the corner of her eye and had made a silvery path down the hot red of her cheek.

"Now," Lucian said angrily, "perhaps you'll go home and stay there!"

She turned her face toward him and they looked at each other for one desperate second of revelation. In that brief instant the savage resentment that each had borne the other for long months seemed suddenly to fall away. They stood, defenseless, frightened, unhappy before each other, as they had stood on Blacksnake in that tender evening light of summer. "Luce—Luce—I can't go," she told him. "I'm not afraid of Bert."

Lucian lifted his hand in a gesture of impatience. "Will you never understand!" he muttered. "Don't you know what's happening here—to all of us? Can't you see? I've heard her talking to you. Do I have to tell you everything before you'll understand?"

"You've told me nothing," she said quietly. "And I'm not asking you anything."

He leaned toward her, a rush of impatience sweeping him. Then he drew back and regarded her as if she had been a child. He began to plead with her.

"Don't talk like that to me, Spingle. Don't! I know I haven't told you anything. I've been out of my mind for weeks. Besides, I thought you'd see for yourself—and understand. I know what sent you here. I've known it from the first. You thought you owed her something. You thought you sent her out into the fog that night. And I tried to tell you. I did it—I! We fought—here in this room. But it was not because of you. Something else, Spingle—something I can never tell you—something I can never tell anyone. But I did it. I brought all this on myself."

"You must believe me now, Spingle. You must! I've got to go on living—through it—to the end. Don't you see? I've got to. But I can't go on with you here. I can't live and see you being drawn into all this mess—the mess I've made of things. I can't live and see her drag you down with the rest of us. You have other things to do—another life to live."

"Don't you remember, Spingle—all we talked about? All I wanted to do—all I wanted you to do? Don't you understand? Do you want to throw your life away, too? Don't, Spingle, don't! You must go away—now—before it's too late! It doesn't matter about us here—any more—but you—"

Karen had listened, resentful at first and stubbornly drawing her defenses about her. But that mood passed quickly. For some time, from the very first, indeed, she had not been altogether convinced of Hattie's sincerity in her protestations of affection. She had been puzzled to account for the woman's hypocrisy, if hypocrisy it was. In her heart, she felt that Lucian was telling her the truth now, that Hattie was putting the curse of her own perverse will on still another life. But why?

Lucian's pleading had brought the tears to her eyes. When he had finished speaking, she replied in a voice that was broken with sobs. "Oh—Luce—I can't—I can't go—not yet! I've promised to stay—till spring." She shook her head impatiently, then lifted her eyes and looked at him. "But why—why should she want to draw me into it all?"

Lucian stared at her.

"Because she hates you," he blustered angrily. "And because she knows I—"

He paused, looked at her searchingly, then closed his eyes slowly and turned away. Halfway across the floor he wheeled upon her suddenly. Karen saw him tremble violently as he strove to speak. Then, without uttering a

word, he turned from her and went heavily up the stairway to his room.

For a long time, then, Karen stood against the wall, her eyes toward the doorway through which Lucian had vanished. Deep down within her a new understanding was born as she stood there in the soft light with the silence of the winter night enfolding her. The pain of it was like a sudden thrust of steel. O groping, stumbling humankind! And O life—moving, inscrutable, despotic life that throws its mantle about our eyes and casts its impenetrable shadow along our path!

And from without came the sudden sharp report of the stone house settling to the frost.

On a sullen night in early March Lucian Dorrit, coming out of the barn where he had bedded the live stock, saw a light straight westward where the night before there had been nothing but prairie darkness. Lucian paused, a strange stillness creeping up over his body. Mons Torson, then, had come home.

Lucian finished his chores in a leisurely fashion which had come to characterize all his actions. Striving of any kind had long since begun to seem to him a little absurd.

But all through his slow activity that evening he was conscious of the tide of insane passion he was holding in check. And he knew that the moment his work was finished he would be powerless to restrain that passion any longer. He knew that he would go to Mons Torson tonight, and that the weeks, months, years of his pent-up bitterness toward the man would find release in violent animal fury.

Lucian did not go in to his supper that evening. He felt no desire to eat, but above all he wished to avoid any questioning on the part of Hattie, who had been moved downstairs into the dining-room. From her straight bed beside the window she could better keep in touch with all that went on inside the house and out. But tonight Lucian did not wish to go near the house. When he heard Karen's call summoning him to supper, he did not reply. Instead he took his way down to the gate.

Mons Torson's face, with its odd, broadly set, gold-yellow eyes, shy and yet challenging, like an animal's, seemed to dance in the darkness before him. He felt a little light-headed. He should, perhaps, have eaten. But what did that matter? What mattered the manifold secret hungers of the body, the comprehensible or the obscure, the lust for bread—or the lust for the light of a star as yet undimmed by its own birth?

He was walking up Torson's rutted driveway now. He was peering through the gray-white darkness, but there was not a sign of Mons anywhere among the farm-buildings. He would be indoors, then.

Without haste Lucian went to the shack and paused a moment before the doorway. Finally, without knocking, he pushed open the door. Mons, pipe in hand, rose from the table as Lucian stepped over the threshold.

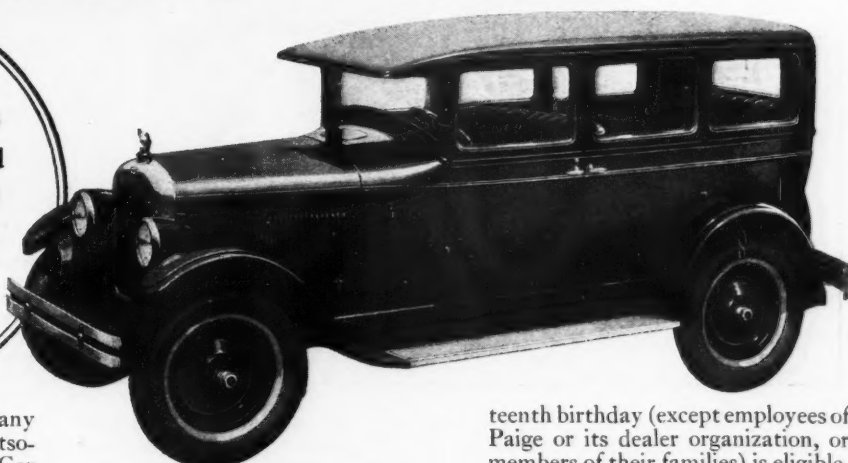
For a moment Torson's face swam before Lucian's eyes as meaningless as a smoke-ring. Then suddenly his whole frame stood limned in devastating clarity. Lucian smiled, a quiet, raw smile of exaltation. He knew now what it was he wanted, had wanted for a century, it seemed, of dire hatred. Carefully, as though marking out a path for himself on treacherous ground, he stepped forward until he could have touched Mons Torson with his hand.

In his place beside the table, Mons stood with an expressionless face, his pipe held in his hand where it had suddenly paused half-way to his mouth. From beneath the peak of his cap a red gleam shot out of Lucian's eyes, a gleam of climactic fury. Torson saw it and his hand curled more tightly about the bowl of his pipe, but he did not move.

Lucian parted his lips. The roof of his mouth was dry, and for a moment he feared that the words that burned on his tongue would not come. Then suddenly he spat out an oath so soft and yet so distinct and violent that it seemed to snap against all the four walls of the room.

FREE \$10,000 in cash for a name

—that will
adequately express
the *smart style* and
matchless vogue of
this beautiful new
Jewett 4-door
Sedan



ENTIRELY free—without any strings or reservations whatsoever—the Paige-Detroit Motor Car Company will give \$10,000 in cash to the person (over 14) in the United States or Canada who suggests the name or phrase that will best express the *style*—the *charming beauty*—the *perfect taste*—the *matchless vogue*—of the new JEWETT 4-door Sedan.

Nor is that all! In addition to the one major award of \$10,000 in cash—this company will give two of these wonderful cars to those two people who suggest the next two most fitting names or phrases.

Come see this new car—soon! Bring paper and pencil with you and jot down each unexpected nicety, each clever new appointment, each luxurious fitting that meets your eyes. Be sure to *get inside* this car—that its atmosphere of luxury may surround you completely. Take a ride—drive it yourself—make a mental note of its buoyancy over rough roads, its quiet, obedient performance at all speeds, its instant acceleration and deceleration (with Paige-Hydraulic 4-Wheel brakes, you know!)—and note, above all, the admiring glances it occasions from passersby and the enthusiastic comments it receives from your fellow-passengers!

See and Admire Its Charm— Then Name It For Us!

After you've seen and admired the charm and beauty and smartness of this Jewett—ask the dealer for an official ballot (or we will mail you one) and write on that ballot the name or phrase (of not more than six words) that you believe most adequately identifies this car as the style carriage it is. Write on this ballot also, in not more than fifty words, your reasons for so naming this car.

There are no difficult or complicated rules about this contest. Every person who has passed his or her four-

teenth birthday (except employees of Paige or its dealer organization, or members of their families) is eligible. Read the simple rules elsewhere on this page—and plan now to name this car for us!

All names and phrases, together with the reasons for selecting them, will be judged by H. M. Jewett, president of the Paige-Detroit Motor Car Company, Charles W. Brooke, advertising expert, president of the Detroit Aircraft Club and Detroit Better Business Bureau, and Edgar A. Guest, the world-famous writer and poet.

Awards made by the judges will be based first on the name or phrase submitted, and second on the reason given for choosing such a name or phrase. To the person awarded first prize by the judges we will promptly award \$10,000 in cash; to the two persons awarded next two prizes by the judges, we will promptly give a beautiful new Jewett sedan delivered to their door, *free!* See this beautiful new car at your Paige-Jewett showroom today! You may win \$10,000—do not delay!

Rules of the Contest:

1. Contest opens Oct. 1, closes at midnight Oct. 31, 1926. Anyone over 14 years of age may compete, except Paige-Jewett employees or members of their families.
2. The prizes are as follows: \$10,000 in cash to the person who submits the most appropriate name or phrase, and gives the best reason for his or her choice; a beautiful new Jewett Sedan to each of the two persons who submit the two next most appropriate names or phrases, and give the best reasons for their choices.
3. The above prizes are awarded for a name or phrase of not more than six words and a reason for selecting such names or phrases. The name or phrase should be such a one as will instantly suggest smartness, style, charm and vogue. The judges will consider first the name or phrase selected, and then the accompanying reason for selecting such name or phrase. The decision of the judges will be final and binding on all contestants.
4. All names or phrases, with reasons therefor, entered in this contest must be written on an Official Ballot which may be secured from any Paige-Jewett dealer, or by writing this company. Every Paige-Jewett dealer will have a ballot-box where these ballots may be deposited after you have made your choice.
5. Originality of thought, cleverness of name or phrase, soundness and brevity of reason advanced, clearness and neatness will count.
6. If two or more contestants submit the same prize winning name or phrase, and reasons for suggesting such name or phrase, and if such entries are submitted in an equally clear, concise and neat form, a duplicate award will be paid to each such tying contestant.

**Go to your
Paige-Jewett Dealer
and get a Ballot
TODAY!**

PAIGE-JEWETT MOTOR CAR COMPANY, DETROIT, MICHIGAN

(813)

Clearing film from teeth whitens surprisingly

Restores cloudy teeth to clearness

Please accept full 10-day tube of this new dental achievement, urged by world's authorities. Note the difference in the color of your teeth and health of your gums as film is cleared off in this new way.



THOUSANDS go through life with clouded teeth, needlessly. Dental science proves this true.

Cloudy teeth now are restored to sparkling clearness. A way found that clears the dingy film coats from teeth that old-time dentifrices failed to combat successfully. One's whole appearance is often changed.

Please accept 10-day tube of the way leading dental authorities now are urging to accomplish that result.

*That stubborn film . . . enemy
of pretty teeth and firm gums*

Dental science now traces scores of tooth and gum troubles to a germ-laden film that forms on teeth. Run your tongue across your teeth and you will feel it—a slippery, viscous coating.

That film absorbs discolorations from food, smoking, etc. And that is why your teeth look "off color," dingy and cloudy . . . why smiles are often unattractive.

It clings to teeth, gets into crevices and stays.



FILM the worst
enemy to teeth

You can feel it with your tongue

It lays your gums open to bacterial attack. Germs by the millions breed in it. They, with tartar, are a chief cause of pyorrhea and decay.

Old ways won't clear it off

Ordinary dentifrices and cleansing won't fight film successfully. Feel for it now with your tongue. Note how your present cleansing method is failing in its duty.

Now new methods are being used. A dentifrice called Pepsodent—different in formula, action and effect from any other known.

Largely on dental advice, the world has turned to this method.

*Cleans film off—
Firms the Gums*

It accomplishes two important things at once: Removes that film, then firms the gums.

A few days' use will prove its power beyond all doubt. Send the coupon. Clip it now before you forget and mail at once.

FREE Pepsodent
Mail this for The New-Day Quality Dentifrice
 10-Day Tube to Endorsed by World's Dental Authorities
 THE PEPSODENT COMPANY,
 Dept. 790, 1104 S. Wabash Ave.,
 Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

Name.....
 Address.....
 Only one tube to a family 2170

Canadian Office and Laboratories: 191 George St., Toronto, Canada
 London Office: 42 Southwark Bridge Rd., London, S. E. 1
 The Pepsodent Co., Ltd., 137 Clarence St., Sydney, N. S. W., Australia

On the last word his fist shot out and there was the sickening plash of flesh on flesh as it struck Torson fairly on the mouth. The man's head jerked backward violently but the great bulk of his body did not move. His head rolled forward heavily as a stunned bull's. His attitude was curiously inert. Again the younger man's fist gathered into a cudgel of steel, but now, for the first time, Lucian was aware of the look in Torson's face. His hand dropped limply at his side. Behind that stolid mask before him shone a suffering of soul that turned his fury-tensed muscles to pulp.

Torson had stepped back to the table to steady himself. His swelling lips parted and his voice came, haltingly.

"All right—all right—go on, I'll take it! Do you think you can hurt me now? I knew you'd find out. But I've come back—d'you get that? I've come back. I'm going to settle—I'm going to pay up . . . I'm going to pay up, I tell you . . ."

His voice had risen, for Luce had turned away and stumbled drunkenly to the door. Without heeding Mons Torson, he went out of the house without closing the door behind him. The light from Torson's lamp caught the flakes of snow that were fluttering softly down against the outer darkness.

Lucian moved eastward, but as he set foot on the Murker land he changed his course, presently reaching the creek that led south toward Loyola. He could not go home now. He might as well go down to the village, he thought dimly. Had he glanced back he might have seen that Mons Torson had followed him from his shack, followed him through the darkness and the falling snow until he had veered toward the creek.

Lucian followed the course of the stream down through the Dorrit farm. The cold air snatched at his breath and rimmed with white the muffler at his chin. Last year he would have gone up the path to his mother's house and sat a while before the fire. It did not occur to him to do so now. The truth of him would be neither seen nor heard in the house where dwelt his fortunate, careless, dreamless brothers and his happy little sister Leona, betrothed now to a sturdy neighbor boy and already secure in her promise of substantial widowhood.

The lamp in the Dorrit house was behind him now and Loyola lay before, a dim scattering of lights in the flat distance. Lucian shivered. They were unutterably cold, those lights.

Tiny and drear, that little prairie town, with its scant handful of bleak little lives . . .

If Mons had only struck back, instead of standing there and looking like that! If the man had only had the character to have it out with him, once and for all! Luce had wanted that physical satisfaction of smashing Mons, but even that had been denied him. You couldn't smash a ghost. Even there Torson, his old friend, had failed him. He wouldn't fight. What was there left now?

There, down westward, where the railroad track would be, a light glimmered apart from the rest, with a separate dull, reddish warmth. It was like a living heart hung there, low in the gray night, free and alone, distinct from the pale, lifeless company of those others. The lamp in Nan Miracle's house. They said it bore a red shade.

Perhaps Karen Strand was looking out of the window now, in Hattie's house, wondering where he had gone. Perhaps—but it wasn't likely. Not that it mattered one way or other. Lucian laughed harshly. In all probability Karen would at this moment be attending to the more delicate needs of Hattie.

A dark impulse moved within him. He had felt it before, but there had always been something—something that checked it in spite of himself. Had Mons Torson fought him? He might have checked that impulse now. As it was, however, what did it matter? He would go down to Nan Miracle. A sort of veil clouded his eyes for a moment as he thought of it. He had heard men tell of the woman's



Pictures of Health

They conquered the common ills—
found glorious, vital health—
by eating one simple food

NOT a "cure-all," not a medicine—
Fleischmann's Yeast is simply a re-
markable fresh food.

The millions of tiny active yeast plants in every cake invigorate the whole system. They aid digestion—clear the skin—banish the poisons of constipation. Where cathartics give only temporary relief, yeast strengthens the intestinal muscles and makes them healthy and active, daily releasing new stores of energy.

Eat two or three cakes regularly every day, one before each meal: on crackers, in fruit juices, water or milk—or just plain, in small pieces. For constipation dissolve one cake in hot water (not scalding) before meals and at bedtime. Dangerous habit-forming cathartics will gradually become unnecessary. All grocers have Fleischmann's Yeast. Buy several cakes at a time—they will keep fresh in a cool dry place for two or three days.

And let us send you a free copy of our latest booklet on Yeast for Health. Health Research Dept. K-46, The Fleischmann Company, 701 Washington Street, New York.



THIS FAMOUS FOOD tones up the entire system—
aids digestion—clears the skin—banishes constipation.



"I WAS TIRED OUT and in a run down condition. I lost my appetite and ambition. Then I began taking Fleischmann's Yeast. The tired feeling left me. The amazing rapidity with which Fleischmann's Yeast put 'pep' in me was surprising."

BERT W. HUSON,
Grand Rapids, Minn.



RIGHT
"I SUFFERED WITH SUCH SEVERE
INDIGESTION that my energy began
to flag and my complexion was becoming
sallow. Then I discovered Fleischmann's
Yeast. A friend insisted that I try it.
Day by day, I ate my three cakes. In
six weeks, marvel of marvels, I found
that my indigestion had disappeared
and my complexion had cleared."

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Test this new AFTER-SHAVING comfort free!

WHAT do you do to your face after shaving? Just dab on powder? Powder blots up moisture—that's what it's for. Try Aqua Velva, Williams new after-shaving liquid, FREE.

1. It conserves the needed natural moisture in the skin. (Powders absorb this—leave the skin dry.) Aqua Velva keeps it as soft and smooth as Williams Shaving Cream leaves it.
2. It tingles delightfully when applied.
3. It gives first aid to little cuts.
4. It delights with its man-style fragrance.
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Send the coupon or a postcard for a generous test bottle FREE. The large five-ounce bottle at your dealer's is 50c (60c in Canada). By mail postpaid if your dealer is out of it.

For use after shaving



Made by the makers of Williams Shaving Cream
The J. B. Williams Co., Dept. 911, Glastonbury, Conn.
(Canadian Address, 1114 St. Patrick St., Montreal)
Send free test bottle of Aqua Velva.

place there by the railroad track. There would be others there, playing cards, perhaps. Some vague sort of decency—who could tell?

It came to him suddenly then that he did not want to go. He had never really wanted to go. He had no wish to go anywhere now. Vice was feeble, as was virtue. All one. Slowly he turned and began retracing his steps homeward along the stream. He was scarcely aware of any feeling of cold. There was a tenderness, a caress in this feathery, white, blurred downfall of snow. It seemed to enclose him preciously from that outside prairie, gray and cruel and heartless, the bitter void that was life. The large, frothy clusters of the snow clung delicately to his cheeks, brushed like a cool, dear love his lips and eyelashes. It was a blessed, falling white silence. Up past his mother's house he walked—between the rows of willows on the banks, where solitude dwelt and a small wind nickered, an elfin spectator, droll, unhuman, cruel.

Lucian had no idea how far he had come. A memory came and walked beside him now like a soft footfall, like a wistful ghost out of the troubled hours of youth. It was the memory of the night when he had skated home from his mother's place, and had leaned back against the bank of the stream, and had thought how easy it would be to fall asleep and let the snow cover him. The atmosphere seemed to weave about him like a slow, heavy dream.

When he reached the curve in the creek's course from which he could see the lights in the stone house, a nameless weariness drew him down into the cozy elbow of the bank. He told himself that it was weariness. He would rest a moment before continuing his way home. There would be no danger of his falling asleep.

It occurred to him then that Mons Torson had looked as though he had not known sleep for a year. And he—Luce Dorrit—had struck him. He had struck a man who looked as though a knife had run him through. He had wanted Mons to know that he had learned the truth about him and Hattie. Had he been any kind of a man he would have spared Torson his knowledge. He would have kept up the pretense of contentment, even with life a cursed stretch of desolation before him. Who was he to blame Mons Torson for what he had done? Or to blame Hattie, for that matter? Life had picked them all for its laughing-stocks. Let the cruel joke stand.

Mons Torson had meant to overtake Lucian, to walk beside him and talk—if he had been able to find the words. But when he had seen Lucian turn toward the creek, he had let him go. Then he had made his way to the stone house. After all, it would be easier now to do what he had come back to do.

There had been years during which Mons Torson knew what he would some day have to do for Lucian Dorrit. Once he had tried—and failed. But the hour was now at hand. Lucian knew the truth about him.

Mons laughed to himself as he strode up the Murker hill, laughed at the grim humor of it all. He had loved Hattie, in his way, as much as he would ever love any woman. He supposed he still loved her, in his way. But he had been square with her. He had told her that he was not a marrying man. That he would break a horse, but that he would not take the trouble to break a woman. He had used those very words. Before anything had happened between them.

But it was not enough for her. She had never forgiven him. She had been too ambitious, that was what was wrong. She had wanted Mons Torson. She had wanted to make one great farm of the Torson and the Murker land. But he had been deaf to her—stone-deaf. And she had sworn—on that last night when he had seen her in her own house—that he should live to repent of what he had done.

Well, she had had her way. She was right. He had lived to repent it. He was here now to atone, to admit that her will was the stronger. What a joke! What a cursed, funny joke!

Somewhere down among the Murker barns he heard an erratic whistling. That would be Bert. He was glad Bert was not in the house. Not that it mattered now. Nothing mattered. He walked boldly up the path from the stone gateway. Here he was at last before the door. It was a strange thing he had come to do. But he had come.

There was a light in the kitchen. He pushed the door open abruptly and walked in. He stood uncertainly for a moment in the middle of the floor, half expecting Hattie to appear before him as she had done on that last night when he had called. How vigorous she had been, how full-bloomed, how fiercely confident, how challenging to something primitive still in a man made lazy, indifferent by civilization! Instead of Hattie, however, it was Karen Strand who came out of that inner room, closing the door behind her, and stood looking at him with startled eyes. Young Karen, who did not know.

"You, Mons!" Karen said softly.

A shock of warmth came into her cheeks as he stood glowering down at her. Why had Mons Torson come?

"Luce is not at home," she ventured.

Torson smiled wanly. "I know that," he told her. "He's gone down the creek there. I've come to see her. Where is she?"

His voice, that could be very mellow in its appeal, was rough, unpleasant. There was something in his bearing that startled her. "No one must see her," she told him. "Doctor Muller—"

He brushed her aside. "I'll see her," he said doggedly. "She wants to see me. Where is she?"

Karen, her eyes wide and dark in a suddenly colorless face, was unable to speak. Mechanically she nodded toward the closed door of the dining-room, and Mons started across the floor at once. Overwhelmed, Karen stood watching him with stricken eyes. What terrible thing had Mons Torson come to do? Luce—where had he gone? Why was he not here? She recalled then what Mons had told her. Down the creek—she would have to go for him.

Mons Torson's shoulders blocked the doorway of the dining-room, which was dimly lighted by the blue-shaded lamp that stood beside Hattie's bed. The bed looked curiously rigid as though it were, under the covers, a slab of stone. The lamplight lay like a frail gauze over the bed and over the white, still hands of the woman upon it.

Lucian Dorrit's wife lifted her eyes slowly, as though with some premonition, toward the doorway. Her gaze met Mons Torson's. It was a look that lasted for many seconds, each of which encompassed years of violent, bridled emotion. It was a furious embrace, that look. At length Mons moved into the room and sat down in the chair beside Hattie's bed.

The woman's face was drained of color. In that blanched, still mask, her eyes were black, terrible. But the man who sat beside her smiled quietly. He leaned forward slightly. "I've come to tell you that you've won, Hattie," he said. "You've got to me at last over the bodies of two men—one not yet buried."

She opened and closed her mouth several times before she spoke. At last the words came cold from between stiff lips.

"Mons Torson—I hate you—I hate you!"

The lines of Torson's face were set, sober. "No, Hattie, you love me," he said softly. "You have always loved me. The hell of it is, I've always loved you."

There was a sharp, sibilant sound as Hattie drew in her breath. A flush crept up and lay almost like a rosy reflection in the hollow of her cheeks. Mons, regarding her, was filled with an extraordinary emotion. It was an emotion that he had fought against for years. He could fight no more. He was a lost man. "It had to be either you or me, Hattie," he resumed, his voice harsh now. "I knew you'd break the man you'd marry—unless he broke you. I was too lazy, too selfish to try it. I

Quality Beyond Comparison

Results from

Chrysler Standardized Quality



By J. E. Fields

There is scarcely a motor car of importance today that does not reflect in either design or practice the influence of Walter P. Chrysler and his engineers.

This is because in the past three years the organization of which Mr. Chrysler is the head has pioneered more improvements in the automobile than had been brought forth in the preceding decade.

The result has been quality beyond comparison and now Mr. Chrysler further emphasizes this quality—makes it more than ever outstanding in all price classes—by his plan of Standardized Quality.

Mr. Chrysler is the first and only large scale manufacturer building four lines of cars under one name and one management in one group of unified plants on a standardized quality basis.

This standardization of quality is the result of an extraordinarily complete co-ordination of engineering and manufacturing facilities and resources.

In the past three years the organization of which Mr. Walter P. Chrysler is the head has pioneered more improvements in the automobile than had been brought forth in the preceding decade.

This has resulted in quality beyond comparison and now Mr. Chrysler emphasizes this quality in all price classes by his plan of Standardized Quality.

J. E. Fields

It governs every minutest operation from the first rough sketch of the engineers, through the working blue prints.

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The result is that each and every model of the four

Chrysler types is standardized as to quality. And the quality of the lowest-priced Chrysler is as unquestionable as that of the highest-priced Chrysler.

There is a difference, of course, in the price of Chrysler models.

But all are absolutely the same in rigid adherence to the law of finer quality.

Thus certainty of Chrysler unsurpassed performance is built into each and every Chrysler model by the Chrysler principle of Standardized Quality.

It brings Chrysler superiority in speed, power, beauty, comfort, roadability and long life within the reach of practically every purse.

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Why Buy a Burgess Flashlight?

WHY buy fire, life, theft or automobile insurance? Or why lock your doors? Simply to guarantee that in emergencies you will receive definite assistance and protection in one form or another which will overcome the immediate danger and possible loss.

Burgess Flashlights have for many years been a convenient and positive guarantee that will guard, guide and aid you against the dangers and inconvenience of darkness.

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knew that. But you've done it. I'm broken. That's what you wanted, wasn't it?"

He paused for a moment or two. Hattie's breathing seemed to have stopped. Her hands lay rigid upon the white spread.

"For years, Hattie, I've been running away from you—from Ben—from Luce—from myself. I've been haunted, night and day. We have committed an abomination in the sight of God. Now—I've come to you."

The long wooden clock on the wall, with its ornate carvings, ticked out the silence. There was no sound in Hattie's weeping. Her tears flowed down from the corners of her eyes and across her temples. She tried to lift one hand to her face, but its strength was gone. Her power had fallen from her like a useless mantle. She lay spent, inert, defenseless.

With his own handkerchief Mons Torson wiped her cheeks and eyes. Then, bending close to her, he drew her head against his shoulder. A sigh seemed to run through her whole body. Her breath caught suddenly. Her fingers crumpled up convulsively into her palms, and then as suddenly relaxed. Mons Torson's eyes brooded down upon her, pityingly, apprehensively.

Lucian Dorrit, sitting in the shelter of the bank, warm and snug in the white darkness, was reluctant to wake. Someone was shaking him.

"Luce—Luce!" It was Karen's voice. She seemed to be crying. Foolish Karen.

She had her arms about him now. Her head was bare. She was kneeling beside him, trying to lift him, his head pressed against her breast. She must be a part of his dream.

Her face was wet with crying. She was talking to him, her voice tremulous and strange. Lucian scarcely heard her. The sense of her words was lost to him until at last she spoke a name that brought him to full consciousness.

"Luce—Luce! Something terrible has happened, Luce. Come quickly. It's Mons—Mons Torson. He has come back, Luce. He is with Hattie. I'm afraid, Luce—I'm afraid!"

Luce stood up and stared at Karen, remembering. Mons Torson—Hattie? And Muller—he had said a shock would . . .

He started up the creek toward the light in the stone house, Karen following him.

Spring in Loyola. Rendezvous of rains and

winds and suns, vagabonds from some uncharted region of summer . . .

Doctor Muller sat hunched down in Mr. Tingley's leather chair. Tingley had been talking of Mons Torson, of Lucian Dorrit, of Hattie and of Karen Strand.

And Muller—Muller had been thinking of the last time he had seen Karen and Luce together. It had been on a soft gray morning a week or so ago, when the doctor had accompanied Karen to the Murker farm to say good-bye to Lucian Dorrit. It had been a simple thing, that farewell, a quiet clasp of hands, a grave searching—out of one pair of eyes into the other. But Muller had had to look away, his heart quickening happily.

"So Carrie got away to the city at last, eh?" he said. "I think we can really expect something big from that girl some day. There's good stuff there. Nobody round here expected her to stick by Hattie the way she did right up to the last. You know, Muller, there was something funny about that whole affair. Mons Torson's being there the night Hattie died, and everything. And they say Luce Dorrit has turned over the whole Murker farm to Bert. Do you think it's true, Muller, that he's going down to the city too?"

"Why not?"

Tingley had no reply to that. But his curiosity was far from sated. Muller, however, had no intention of sating that curiosity. He was reflecting now upon the Luce Dorrit who had come into his office that very afternoon, carrying with him his first letter from Karen Strand. At the sight of his face the doctor knew that some strange alchemy unknown to Muller's profession had effected a change within him. He had become again the boy Muller had known back beyond a shadowy yesterday.

"Look here, Muller," he said. "As man to man, was it heart-failure that killed Hattie?"

"No," Muller said briefly, "not heart-failure. As man to man, Tingley, since you ask it, I should say she died of—frustration."

Tingley puffed silently on his cigar. He experienced a short-lived dubiousness concerning Muller's remark. He decided at last that it was a clever reply. Inwardly he glowed with pleasure in the conviction that to himself only, of all the people of Loyola, would Muller have said such a thing.

THE END

My Life in Darkest Africa (Continued from page 67)

swallowed them up. Now and again we get a letter from one or the other of them, delivered by the hand of a friend who is perhaps a cannibal—what do we care? The hand of a friend with a letter in it is not to be misprized.

Deserted by Jewel and Gayle, George and I are left to practise many professions, without a license. And I must say that as Saturday morning grows, George assumes the postures of as many men as are needed on the station. There is the Head of the Industrial Department astride a roof-tree, and from the roof-tree the Head of the Agricultural Department ponders the grievous lament of the foreman of the boys who are harvesting the corn. In the storehouse there is a man counting out wages to carriers, and they are villains—if I am to credit the desperate Saturday morning idiom of that man, they are villains of the deepest dye. There is a man pursued by a group of gaudy rustics who yearn to tell him about a runaway wife and that she was purchased for nothing less than an ivory as big as your thigh.



All these men, and more, are George; our little settlement—with its showing of thatched cabins and brown bodies and sunlight—is full of him. I see him everywhere, and with this heavy handicap I nevertheless try to forget him. I try to forget him like this because I think he has a fever and when I put a thermometer in his mouth he walks away with it, mumbling. So I think—what is the use?

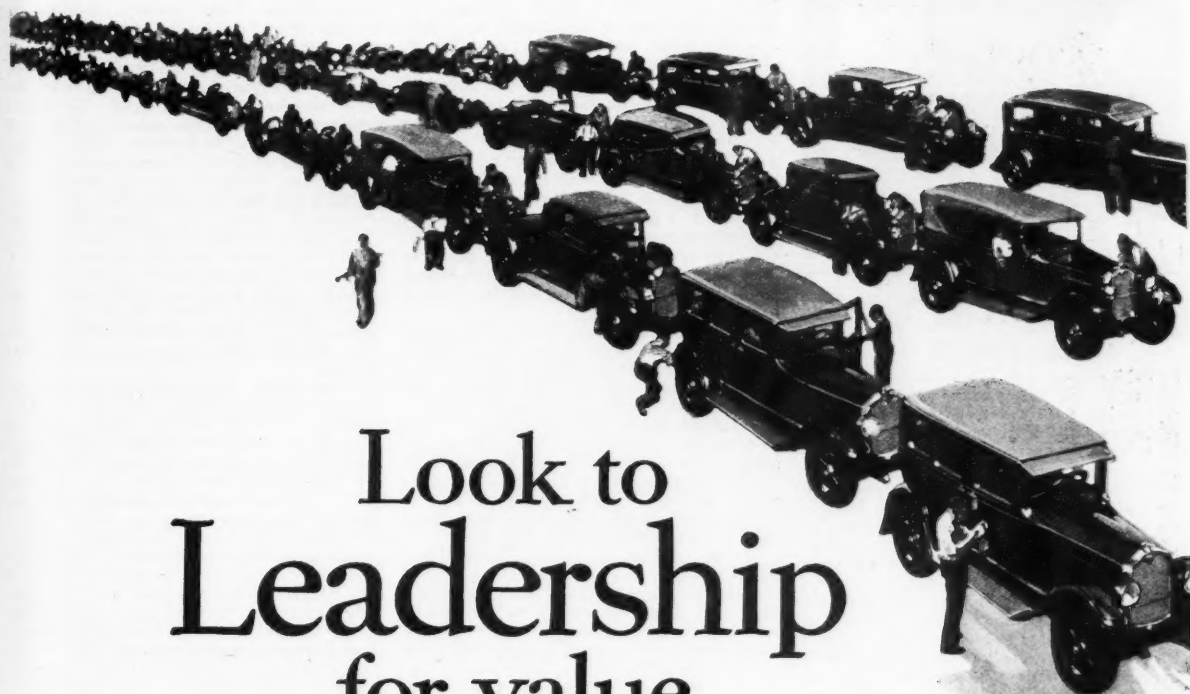
I have forgotten him. I am talking to the

beautiful young head-girl of my school. In the girls' quarters—they are deserted now while the little girls are out in the gardens earning their Sunday's bread, digging the earth and grumbling—my head-girl and I have a faculty meeting. I am complaining that the girls at noon of yesterday—that sacred hour when the white people are known to be at rest—at that sacred hour the little girls made too much noise, too much of a peculiar sort of laughter and shouting. Not I alone had observed it; Mr. Schwab himself had complained bitterly, begging me to beg my head-girl to beg the schoolgirls to be more quiet at the time when the sun is in the middle and the white people are at rest.

Beautiful Abang has a grave face. She is not naked like the most of my crew, with their economical leaf aprons and their bustles that are fine and sleek as a cob's tail. Abang wears a square of bright cloth brought up from the beach; in the coils of her dressed hair she has thrust a tin ornament tipped with three balls, like a pawn-brokers' sign. This gleam of silver by her dark temple becomes her. Her patience, while I dictate my message to the girls, is like the inscrutable patience of a superior stenographer. She says when I pause that she will indeed tell the girls what I have been saying, but that the noise, so peculiar, at the time of the rest of the white people yesterday, was not from the girls' town—it was from the forest. The monkeys were making that noise.

At this I feel very silly; I don't know what to


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Auto-Intoxication . .

*.. a form of self-poisoning..
the most common ailment
of these hurried times..*

Are there days when you arise in the morning, not feeling refreshed—with no appetite for breakfast—with no zest for life? Are there "off-days" when the slightest task is irksome—when the pettiest problem taxes your powers of concentration? Auto-Intoxication—the result of our modern mode of life—is the cause of thousands of such days.

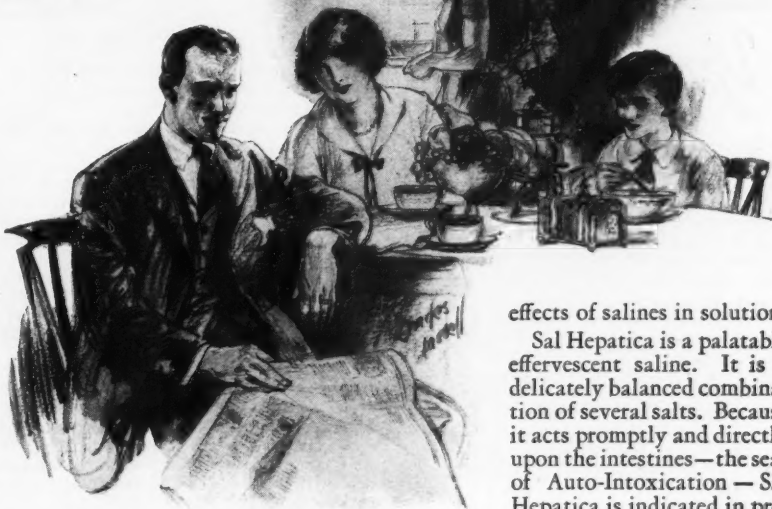
In this fast-moving age we rely too much upon nervous energy. Irregular in our habits of sleep and exercise and diet, we no longer lead the normal lives that Nature meant us to.

Physical labor we scarcely know—but we drive our brains overtime. There are so many things to do, so many places to go, that most of us "live on our nerves." Few of us take proper care of our physical selves—few of us keep really fit.

We all have "off-days"—days when, for no apparent reason, our minds are dull, our bodies weary.

Auto-Intoxication is a needless drag on health

Often the trouble is a very simple one—stoppage of waste products in the intestines. Sluggish bodily functions permit food to remain within us too long, fermenting and setting up poisons. The result is intestinal toxemia, or Auto-Intoxication—the most common Twentieth Century ailment.



Some of the signs of Auto-Intoxication are headache, indigestion, irritability, nervous depression, fatigue. Unchecked, it may lead to more serious troubles, for this "self-poisoning" weakens the body's resistance to disease. It robs nearly every one of some part of health, some portion of vitality.

Few of us indeed are free from the poisons of Auto-Intoxication. One authority says: "That the whole subject of Auto-Intoxication is becoming increasingly important is due to the fact that more and more people complain of work being irksome; that one rises in the morning not feeling refreshed; that the 'tired feeling' is so predominant."

Yet, Auto-Intoxication could hardly exist if we lived the kind of life that would keep our poison-clearing processes in perfect order.

Sal Hepatica prevents stoppage and sweeps away intestinal poisons. Its use is the approved way to relieve and help prevent Auto-Intoxication—for the best results are had by the mechanical action of water, plus the eliminant

effects of salines in solution.

Sal Hepatica is a palatable effervescent saline. It is a delicately balanced combination of several salts. Because it acts promptly and directly upon the intestines—the seat of Auto-Intoxication—Sal Hepatica is indicated in preventing this self-poisoning, where the first step is always to correct stoppage and cleanse the intestines of those poisons which are at root of the so many of our modern ills. You ought to have a bottle in the house always.

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SAL HEPATICA has been the standard saline for 31 years. It is pleasant to take and prompt in its action. Sold in three sizes in all drug stores. Buy the large size for economy.

Sal Hepatica



*Your face is
my territory*

I JUST RECEIVED THIS LETTER:

Dear Jim:
I'm a peddler—a paint peddler.
Just plain paint. You know—house
paint, barn paint, mill and factory
paint.

As one salesman to another though,
I want to tell you that your trio of
Gloom Chasers is the best ever. They
ring the bell.

Why, ever since you've made 'em
I've been Smilin' Thru your lather,
balm and powder every morning.
Fraternally,
LWW

In one way, I'm practically a paint
salesman myself.

I'm selling nature's own face paint
—a good complexion. Your physiog-
nomy is my territory.

Suppose tomorrow A. M. you begin the
shaving sprint with a coat of Mennen lather
—super-moist, triple strength. Mixes with
any local water. Whips the fight out of the
toughest, scrappiest crop of whiskers that
ever bristled up to a keen-edged blade—and
whips them until they purr. One round of the
razor flips them off without a twinge.

You get a shave that's an asset—quick,
close and flattering. Our scientists call this
Mennen beard taming process *dermutation*.
You'll call it *transformation*.

Then try a few squirts of Mennen Skin
Balm in the wake of the razor blade. At
first it bites agreeably—that's the antiseptic,
astringent touch. Then it briskly stimulates
the circulation—sets the skin a-tingling.
You know you *like* it, right on the spot.
Your mirror will convince you that you
want it. Your face looks healthy, smooth, un-
blemished. Skin Balm comes in leak-proof
form in handy tubes. Fifty cents a throw.

For the final touch of good grooming, flick
a film of Talcum for Men over all. Neutral
in tone. Doesn't show on the face. So mildly
perfumed, even an inquiring public won't
smell out your secret. That's the Mennen
Shave in toto. You'll want to be initiated.

Jim Henry
(Mennen Salesman)

MENNEN
SHAVING CREAM

Rich but Honest (Continued from page 81)

her landlady's notification that she had a caller,
she went down-stairs.

Bob was crude. That was her first impres-
sion. Despite his sleek hair and handsome face,
he had an awkward air. But that was because
he was different from Cather, and the Johns
like Cather. He was honest, this youth who
worked for his living, and what was crudity
when honesty lay behind it?

"I've missed you," she told him frankly.

"Well, I've missed you, Florine," he ad-
mitted. "Let's hustle into our taxi. Got your
bag packed?"

She nodded, her cheeks flaming.

"Atta girl!" he commended her. "Well,
we'll hustle to the train, and—" He looked
at his watch. "It's nine-thirty now. We
haven't too much time."

"I don't see how we can go way down-town,
get a license and be married and still catch the
ten-o'clock train," she laughed.

He stared at her. "What's the big idea,
Florine?"

Her blank eyes met his own.

"This license stuff, this marriage bunk," he
explained. "Don't tell me that a girl who'll
stand naked, for all New York to look at her,
has to see a minister before she'll go on a trip
to the lakes with her sweetie."

She couldn't have told you afterwards
whether she slapped his face or not. She only
knew that she was lying on her bed, sobbing,
when the landlady once again informed her that
a gentleman was calling.

So—all men were alike. Let a girl do some-
thing unconventional and all her actions,
it necessarily followed, were unconventional.
Bob, who knew her so well, believed—the
swine, the cur dog! He was worse than Dick,
who hadn't known her so long, who had met
her in the atmosphere of the theater, who
could be pardoned . . .

Well, if all men were like this, better pick
the man with the most money, the man who
would be most generous.

Once again she went down-stairs, and this
time she carried a suitcase with her. Dick
rushed forward, his freckled face one broad
grin.

He threw his arms about her and kissed her
fervently.

"My sweet sweetie," he crooned. "Didn't

keep me waiting, just a good girl that's waiting
for her man—come along, girlie."

She had not returned his kiss; she had lain
unresponsive in his arms; but he hadn't
noticed. His own enthusiasm was great
enough for two.

On the stoop he paused. "Note the bus," he
said proudly.

It was not last night's closed car, but a
roadster, brand-new, shining in its enamel
and nickel.

"Bought it this very morning. Had to pay a
bonus for it, but that didn't matter when it's
for my girl. Like it?"

She nodded, unable to speak. She let him
stow the suitcase in the back of the car, let
him help her into the seat, and leaned back
apathetically as he started the machine.

"Kind of sad, girl?" he inquired, after ten
minutes of silence.

She made no answer, but he saw the tears
slipping down her cheek.

"You don't need to be, honey," he told her.
"Nothing's going to interfere with your doing
what you want. If you want to stick to the
stage—stick."

"Oh, I wasn't thinking about that," she
replied. "I—I—you know I'm a good girl,
don't you, Dick?"

"Nobody could tell me different," he an-
swered.

The high bridge over the Harlem distracted
her mind. "This isn't the way to Great Neck,"
she said.

"Of course it isn't," he agreed. "But I'd
hate to hang around City Hall for three hours
waiting for a license. Out in Greenwich you
can get it in three minutes, be married in
five more. Besides, the minister that married
my parents lives out there, and I telephoned
him last night—I'd hate to have anyone else
marry us, girl. Does it make any difference
to you?"

Her voice was hysterical as she answered,
"It doesn't, Dick. Indeed it doesn't."

A moment later she leaned against him,
endangering both their lives as the wheel
twisted and the car swerved.

"Oh, Dick," she sighed, "I didn't know what
love was until a minute ago."

"Well, it's great, isn't it?" he chuckled.

Yes, indeed, they can be rich and also honest.

The Little Gold Ring (Continued from page 97)

trustful gesture held out her hand. "I thought
I liked you in the light of the lantern," she
said. "And now I know that I do. Very
small place, the world."

"And one of the best if you know how to
work it. I'm frightfully keen about life.
And so you're the kid who wrote those amusing
letters to Harry and supplied his mess with
cigarets! Are you the youngest of Lord
Woodstock's brood?"

She nodded. "And rather by way of being
the ugly duckling, I'm afraid."

"Haven't you escaped from the farm a
bit before your time?" he asked. It would
have been too hopelessly feeble to have refuted
her statement—especially at a moment when
her attraction was so magnetic. "Don't you
think it might have been better if you had
been content to swim about the pond for a
year or two longer instead of making for the
main stream quite so soon?"

"No," she said. "I don't think so. We of
the younger generation are inclined to take
risks, you know."

Harewood was thinking hard. "The odd
part of it is," he said, "that I seem to know
Lamberhurst too."

"I thought I did," she said. "But I don't,
as it turns out."

Which added another block to the picture
puzzle that he was trying to build, in which
this girl and her husband played the leading

parts. "I asked if I could do anything for
you. Can you think of anything?" He felt
bound to let her hand go. It belonged to an-
other man.

She gave the question a moment's consider-
ation, looking straight into his eyes the while.
"Yes," she said finally. "There is. I shall be
most awfully obliged if you will prevent George
Lamberhurst from following me up. I mean
for about five minutes. Do you think that
you could keep him talking for that length of
time?"

"As long as you like," he said—"though it
probably won't be easy." He had no intention
of pressing for an explanation. But he hoped
that she would lift a fold of the veil of what
was a growing mystery and give him a peep
at the truth.

She seemed to be on the verge of doing so
but drew back like a rider at a rather difficult
jump when steps were heard on the stairs.
And so instead she said, "What time do you
have breakfast generally?"

"Oh, about eight as a rule."

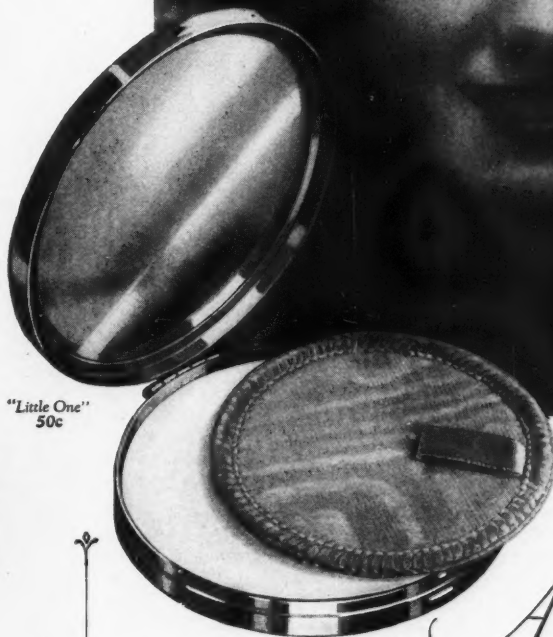
"If you can give me ten minutes over your
eggs and bacon I shall probably want to con-
fide. George will have gone by then if I know
anything about it."

"You mean that you're—you're not going
with him?"

"I do," she said. "This is the beginning
and the end. But I shall have to ask you to

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Read the list. These are the things you want, aren't they? The booklet tells how to get them. If you need further information after reading it, a Phoenix Mutual Counselor will be glad to be of service to you. You will find him a very unusual man. He is competent to help and advise you, for he has had long years of practical experience or he has been through an intensive course of training in our service school at Hartford. His whole idea of life insurance is to put the emphasis on the *life*—on the things that make for more fun in living, for freedom from worry, for larger success.

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help me if you will. I have need of a friend."
"Not merely for your brother's sake, you can absolutely rely on me."

And before she could make any answer Lamberhurst came down. Her smile was, however, all the reward that Harewood needed.

"All in order," said Lamberhurst. "Now, no nonsense, Diana. Toodle up to bed. It's a charming room and I've laid out all your things."

"Excellent," said Diana. "Where did you get your training as a maid?" And with a wave of her hand and a chuckle she mounted the creaking stairs.

With the slightly triumphant smile of a man who always had had his own way Lamberhurst possessed himself of a cigaret and the most comfortable chair. "A whisky and soda would be rather jolly," he said.

Harewood would have betted on that. And as he wanted one himself, feeling the need of a stimulant at that moment of puzzlement, he crossed to a cupboard on the far side of the room. But just as he was putting the bottle, a siphon and two glasses on a gate-legged table he heard a sound that made him look quickly at the man at his elbow.

It was of a key that had been turned in a lock—the key of the spare room door.

Asking himself what the devil would happen next, Harewood saw a blaze of anger come into Lamberhurst's eyes. He, too, had heard that sound, then, and was well aware of its meaning. With quiet deliberation he had been locked out. But with an excellent effort he controlled himself. His hand was perfectly steady when he mixed his drink. All that he permitted himself to say at the moment was "Curious cattle, women. Well, here's luck." And then he went into a dissertation on the subject of cars and engines, main roads and sign-posts, as if nothing had happened to upset all his plans. It was really quite well done.

To all of which Harewood paid no attention. He was thinking of something else—of several other things. Harry Banbury was one of them, that reckless young flying man whom he had found under a smashed machine and carried back while he himself fought a rear-guard action day after day for a week. From this mere lad, whose spirits had never wavered, he had heard of Di, the little sister, and listened to her cheery letters, which were full of fun. They had made him want to know that girl.

Good Lord, and here she was, newly married to Lamberhurst by the rottenest stroke of luck, a man, as she had discovered so suddenly, who was not the one for her. A most unfortunate lap too late. And then he swung his thoughts to Lamberhurst, who was conducting a persistent monolog in order to disguise his anger and amazement at the extraordinary turn of affairs. Lamberhurst . . . Lamberhurst. He would be blessed if he could remember what was hanging to that name.

Before very long the dissertation ended and then Harewood caught the ball and batted it about. He talked about the country and the weather, golf and the state of the greens. And while he talked he studied the restless workings of Lamberhurst's mouth—a sensual, selfish and not overscrupulous mouth. It was evident that in spite of his rigid stoicism he was chewing the bitter cud. His thick eyelashes flicked rapidly as though he were trying to focus upon a method of action.

He ran in a comment from time to time, said "I see," or "Quite," but it was plain to Harewood that the brain of the man who had been locked out of his wife's room was running at full speed. His pulse quickened. It was shown by the beat of his foot. And as he came nearer and nearer to a decision the veins on his temples swelled. Harewood could see that everything in this man's nature revolted against Diana's unexpected rebellion. He was the man who drove and, by Jove, he would not have the wheel taken out of his hand.

Just as he was about to get up, march upstairs and batter at the door, he bent forward to throw the end of his cigaret into the embers

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ETIQUETTE DEMANDS THE PERSONAL LETTER

BY BETTY LEE MONTAG

Like most women, I love the so-called "little" attentions. It was heart-warming, on my birthday, recently, to receive letters and printed greetings from all my friends. But, somehow, I warmed to the letters most. They were personal—they had been composed especially for me!

We, of the old South, feel that a personal letter on the shoddiest of paper, is yet personal—and to be prized accordingly.

But, of course, the paper *is* important.

The smart and dainty woman of fashion, the well-bred man of the world, are writing letters (and clever, engaging letters they are) on papers that express their personalities, and reveal their good taste.

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of the fire so that his profile was outlined against the flicker of almost burnt-out logs.

Dugout! A pail with holes in it in which was burning a handful of wet sticks. A night in March, 1918. The beginning of the great backward movement of the Allied Armies in France . . . No wonder there was something in that profile to stir the memory of an offensive incident in Harewood's mind.

Lamberhurst rose. "Good night," he said. "Thank you. If ever I can do anything for you, let me know."

Harewood pointed to the chair in which Lamberhurst had been sitting. He said, "You can do something for me now. You can respect your wife's desire to be alone tonight."

At which Lamberhurst whipped round with a rather nasty look. "What the devil's that got to do with you?" he asked.

Harewood was perfectly cool. He held an excellent hand of trumps. "It has a good deal to do with me. First of all your wife's a friend of mine and secondly you will disturb the nice old lady who runs this cottage if you make a noise outside the spare room door. Good reasons both, I think."

"I'm afraid I don't agree with you," said Lamberhurst. He took a step towards the staircase.

"One second," said Harewood. "Do you remember being sent to me with a chit from Colonel Summers one filthy night in March, 'eighteen?"

Lamberhurst shot a quick look at his host. "No," he said. "I don't."

"No? All right. Then let me see if I can't refresh your memory. It was pretty quiet when you came over and after you had delivered the chit and were waiting for my answer you squatted over a bit of a fire that was burning in a pail. I had been trying to cook some tea. I wrote out my report to the Colonel, you took it and disappeared. About five minutes after you were gone the Germans tried to spot my battery, which I persisted in making as uncomfortable as I could. They were a little out in their calculations and their barrage was laid a hundred yards behind. I held my fire while this went on.

"My answer never reached the Colonel although you reported the following morning. If my report had been delivered that night several of my officers and half my men might still have been alive. It was not until after the Armistice that I heard from Colonel Summers that you gave out that you hadn't been able to find me, had lost your way, been held up by the barrage and had only been able to get back by an amazing piece of luck."

"A cursed lie," said Lamberhurst, adding, "You're mixing me up with someone else."

Harewood went to his desk which stood between the windows, opened a drawer and brought out a silver cigarette case on which there was engraved a crest. "At any rate," he said, "the officer who delivered the chit that night left this thing on the ground. Oddly enough I see that the crest on your signet-ring is exactly the same as the one that's cut on this—a mailed hand grasping a dagger. Motto '*Vultus in hostem.*' Take a look." He held out the case to the man who would have been white to the gills but for the tan on his face. "If you're keen about mementoes," he added, "you may like to add this to your collection."

Lamberhurst took it. He had nothing to say just then. And so there were several moments of the profoundest silence in that delightful sitting-room.

"All the same I don't see what all this has got to do with the case in point," said Lamberhurst finally. "It doesn't give you the slightest right to order me about or control my actions."

"Don't you think so?"

"I certainly do not."

"Well, let me show you how I think it does. You belong, I take it, to some of the senior clubs. A letter from me to the various committees setting out what I've just told you would result, of course, in your name being removed from the lists of members. I think therefore, that you had better sit down."



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Lamberhurst looked from the chair to the grave strong face of the major whose name had frequently stood out in fiery letters in some of the silent moments of his life. If he had been honest then he would have confessed his never-to-be-forgotten shame. He was not a coward or a weakling and except for this incident his record during the war had been above reproach. His nerves had broken that night and since then his conscience had made him pay a heavy price for his temporary collapse. "All right," he said, "you've got me. I'll leave Diana alone. But if it's all the same to you, I'll grope my way down the steps again and see what I can do with the engine."

"Just as you like," said Harewood. "Take some cigarettes. An old trench coat is any good to you . . ."

Lamberhurst shook his head. "Good-by," he said abruptly.

On the way to the door he picked up his cap and his suitcase, went out on the terrace and disappeared.

With a feeling of immense relief Harewood followed him out, listened to his retreating footsteps and heard the click of the gate. Then he turned and looked up at the spare room window. It was open; the room was in darkness, but he could just make out the outline of a small bobbed head.

"Harry told me you were a man who could be relied on," said Diana. "I'm looking forward to eggs and bacon in the morning. Many thanks. Good night."

Harewood lost more than an hour's sleep that night. His brain was full of questions when he returned to bed. Why had this young thing married a man like Lamberhurst? Surely she must have known him long enough to discover that behind his attractive mask there was a most rampant ego.

Were Lord and Lady Woodstock too fed up with the independence of the younger generation to take any interest in the marriage of their youngest daughter? Where was Harry, whose great affection for his little sister was no mere pose? Had this girl allowed herself to be rushed into a secret marriage? There was something very difficult to understand in this affair.

Lamberhurst was of course a gentleman in the general acceptance of the term. He had money, was probably in the best of the hunting sets and all the rest of it. He was, however, well into the forties. The most cursory knowledge of his character must have shown that he was a despot.

Over and over again Harewood asked himself what it was that Lamberhurst had said, either on the road or in the sitting-room, immediately after the rescue, to bring about so sudden a revulsion of Diana's feelings. He got no nearer to a solution of the puzzle and gave it up. The only thing that was quite plain to him was the fact that the girl whose acquaintance he had made in her brother's letters during the war was even more charming than he had imagined her to be.

And this was the thought that went into his dreams.

Called at half past seven the following morning, according to his usual Saturday plan, the first thing that he did was to go down the steps to the lane and along the lane to the road. The Lamberhurst car had gone. The man whose motto was "*Vultus in hostem*" must have telephoned from the Black Bull to the mechanic in Kingstone Green very early in the morning. Had he driven back to London or gone to the nearest town to wait until a later hour before returning to claim his wife? Whatever he had said to make her call him a liar, he had a perfect right to do that.

He found Diana in the sitting-room looking as fresh as a daisy. The eggs and bacon were on the table, with coffee and toast. She received him with a rather mischievous smile. "Good morning, Major Harewood," she said. "Has he driven away as I said he would?"

"Yes," said Harewood. "How soon do you suppose he'll come back for you?"

She laughed. "Oh, there's not the slightest

chance of his coming back," she said. "How do you like your coffee? Half and half?"

"Please."

"I've been dreaming about eggs and bacon and I'm as hungry as a wolf. By the way, I've made the acquaintance of your old lady. She's a darling. She gasped at the sight of me. Shall I see your sister before I leave?"

Harewood handed her the butter. "I hope you'll see her many times over the week-end. I can see no earthly reason why you should leave until Monday morning. And then I'll take you to town."

"I hoped you would ask me to stay. I said that merely to fish for an invitation."

"Do you play golf?"

"Does a duck swim?"

"Splendid. You can use my sister's clubs. And on Monday you—you join your husband?"

She put two lumps of sugar into her coffee, looked at him with a still more mischievous smile and threw a metaphorical bomb into the middle of the breakfast table.

"Yes, but, you see, he's not my husband."

"He's not your—"

"No. I've been saving that little surprise. I didn't really intend to spring it until you had finished breakfast. I thought you would be stronger then."

"I'll be hanged if I know what you mean."

"Why not? It's perfectly simple," she said.

"As you will be able to judge by this incident, I am a full-blown modernist and as I can see from your expression that you're one of the old-fashioned brigade to which my father belongs, let me explain that a modernist is a person who doesn't believe in marriage."

"Who doesn't believe in marriage?"

"Precisely. To me and all my gang it's a completely outworn institution, a back number, a stuffed Victorian canary under a dusty enclosure of glass. All the same, of course, we're human and so we fall in love—or imagine that we do. I imagined that I was in love with George Lamberhurst and we were on our way to France. I suppose that he told you that. It was to be my first great breakaway—what the pioneers of our movement call leading one's own life. But, you see, as soon as it came to a show-down George lacked courage and hedged; and by passing me off as his wife—a word we don't allow—ruined the thing at the start. I detest a liar, as you heard me say, and so this is where it ends."

Harewood's breakfast grew cold, though not so cold as his spine. He was struck by an icy chill as he listened to the creed of this child—this fearless, foolish girl.

"Is there no clause in your modernist creed," he asked, keeping himself under control, "that points to the advisability of finding out what sort of man he is to whom you hand yourselves?"

She had rather expected sarcasm. "I've not heard of it," she said. "Excellent marmalade, this."

"Um," said Harewood, quoting from a statement made by a professor who was very much worried as to the future of the world, "There's a very dangerous streak of lunacy about the modern girl." To which he added, on his own responsibility, "Spanking would probably cure her better than anything else."

There was a ripple of laughter. "A truly Woodstockian remark. How often I've heard it at home."

"I'm not surprised at that." He was angry. In fact he was filled with a boiling indignation. The idea that any well-bred girl, and especially this one, should bolt in cold blood with any man who took her fancy, under the belief that she was being frightfully clever and frightfully up to date, made him want to explode.

"Like my dear old father," she said, as cool and green as a cucumber, "you fail to grasp the point. The younger generation is kicking over the traces all along the line. It's the aftermath of the war."

"Running amuck, in fact." He pushed back his chair and got up. He couldn't stand any more of such head-lines without a pipe.

It was, however, as he could see, rather worse than useless to argue, to browbeat, and to come out with a series of sensible remarks which would only have the effect of focusing the limelight upon this child, of making her see herself not as a ridiculous and tragic figure, but as a heroine, a Joan of Arc.

So, holding himself in, he waited until she had finished her breakfast, and then, handing her a cigarette, piled all the cushions in the corner of one of the settees and led her to it as though she were a middle-aged woman of the world.

He spoke with bantering sarcasm. "You may not know it, but your modernism is a little out of date. All that tosh about free love, leading your own life and treating the conventions as though they were ninepins belongs to the old days of militant suffragists. It's Adelphi Terrace stuff of the vintage of 1908. It belongs essentially to the period of paper curlers, long and frowzy skirts, and rather ugly faces. It was swept away by the war."

There was amazement in Diana's eyes. Her father and mother and other conventional people had never said those things.

Harewood could see that he was on the right track. Ridicule and satire, as he had discovered before, were much more effective weapons in dealing with youth than indignation and horror. "To take your case for a moment," he said, pretending to be greatly amused—"how do you suppose that you and George Lamberhurst could have made a tour in France if he had not lied to the hotels as he lied to me and passed you off as his wife? You wouldn't have been taken in. Free love is not permitted even in France without a blanket of camouflage. Did you never think of that?"

She shook her head. How terribly young she was!

"To be perfectly serious for a moment," said Harewood, "the gang with whom you've been consorting have obviously been sitting with their faces to the wall. Much water has passed under the bridges since they wrote their creed. The modernist, as a matter of fact, of whom I happen to be one, has suddenly discovered that marriage is quite the latest thing and that the little gold ring is so frightfully new as to come under the heading of futurism. But, of course, there's something to go with that which seems to have been omitted since the days of good Queen Anne. You will be amazed to hear it's love."

He left her sitting bolt upright and went into the garden. He hoped that she felt a fool. He hoped that during the whole of that day and the next one she would think the dreadful episode over and emerge with a grain of sense. Perhaps it was the sun and the scent of his flowers, the cheerful song of the birds, the glorious and unconquerable sanity of nature that gave him optimism. The subject, at any rate, was never discussed again.

With golf and cheerful meals, the presence of a new moon, laughter, tobacco, the quaint remarks of the exemplary old lady, the subtle helpfulness of Harewood's sister, the week-end passed most pleasantly and all too soon. And when, on Monday morning, Harewood took his guest to the train and from the train to the door-step of Lord Woodstock's London house, optimism was still with him and something else besides. And that was hope.

He took her hand and held it. "Are you doing anything on Friday afternoon?"

Diana thought for a moment.

"Well," she said, "I did think of hiring a car and breaking down in your lane."

"A corking idea," he said. "Better still, why not let me fetch you about five-thirty so that we can catch the six-fifteen?"

"All right," she said. "I find that I'm rather fond of trains." She laughed and added, "Since cars came in, one's forgotten just how modern they really are, you know."

He kissed her hand. He jolly nearly kissed her lips. He was a man of great control. "God bless your sense of humor," he said.

"God bless yours," said she.

And that's the end—or rather the beginning, as, of course, you knew it would be.

Money to Burn by Peter B. Kyne (Continued from page 87)

at eight percent, payable semiannually, on a farm in Mercer County, Ill., to secure a promissory note of Hiram Butterworth given my grandfather. My mother was the sole heir of my grandfather's body, and I am the sole heir of hers. She is dead and so is my grandfather. Mortgage dated August 10, 1882, deficiency judgment dated March 23, 1887. Do not telegraph, as desire keep this matter absolutely secret and telegrams to Pilarcitos are broadcasted by operator. Answer.

Nellie C. Cathcart,
Pilarcitos, California"

"Christopher Columbus!" murmured Absolom McPeake. "What do you think of that?" He rang for his secretary. "The Butterworth file," he commanded.

The girl brought it. It took Mr. McPeake less than a minute to unearth a duplicate copy of a mortgage given to Benedict Catheron, of Davenport, Iowa, by Hiram Butterworth, on a section of land in Mercer County, Ill., to secure a promissory note for forty thousand dollars at eight percent interest payable semiannually, and if not so paid semiannually, to be added to the principal and bear interest at a like rate. The mortgage bore the date August 10, 1882. A minute later the lawyer had unearthed a record of a deficiency judgment against Hiram Butterworth, in favor of Benedict Catheron, dated March 23, 1887.

He sat staring at the telegram. "Nellie C. Cathcart," he murmured. "Where have I heard that name Cathcart recently? Cathcart. Cathcart. Ah, yes! N. C. Cathcart, trust officer of the bank that made that report on Elmer Clarke to old Hiram."

He took the letter in question from the file and read it again.

"N. C. Cathcart, Trust Officer, is a girl. N. C. Cathcart is Nellie C. Cathcart. A girl, by thunder—and a smart girl! The Pilarcitos Commercial Trust and Savings Bank didn't make this report. Nellie C. Cathcart made it. Oh Lord, for a secretary with brains like Nellie! She's up to snuff. She knew all about Hiram Butterworth and she made it strong—so strong it knocked old Hiram clear off his perch. She figured on doing just that—and she succeeded. She ought to be president of that bank and I'll bet she will be—after that mortgage is paid."

He reread the letter. "Between the lines I seem to see something," he soliloquized. "Nellie Cathcart is in love with Elmer Clarke. That's why she wants this little discovery kept a profound secret. Going to surprise Elmer on their wedding-day, I suppose. Bully for you, Nellie. You're all right and I'll play the game with you. Now, how did she learn of this clause in the will so promptly? That's easy. Bullard, of James, Bullard and Yohn, counsel for the bank down-stairs, was in to look at the will just before I took it up to the courthouse to be filed. Nellie wired the bank for detailed information about the will, and the bank furnished it, whereupon Nellie cinched her case and wired me. Well, good news shouldn't be hoarded. I'm going to disobey Nellie and send her a telegram to Pilarcitos." He did. It was at the bank waiting for Nellie when she got there that same morning. It read:

Dear Nellie. You win. Congratulations. May I come to the wedding? Mum's the word. Mac

Contrary to Ansel P. Moody's declaration that Nellie had no sense of humorosity, she wired back immediately, straight message:

Dear Ab: You're awfully fresh, but I like you, so you may come to my wedding. As you are not a banker, it probably has never occurred to you that funds at six percent compounded semiannually practically double every twelve years. O

Time, where is thy sting at eight percent? How about income taxes, federal inheritance taxes? Who gets this last, Iowa or California or both? Am not grafting free legal advice either. Send your bill for the answer. Nellie

The following morning old lady Bray was again "knocked all of a heap" when she took the following night letter over the wire:

Nellie, you are priceless. Our reverend Uncle Samuel cannot get his hands on any income earned or due prior to March 15, 1913, although he does participate in all income from interest collected thereafter, and I do not see how we can dodge it.

Federal inheritance tax may not apply at all in this case because the legal heir of Catheron's body inherits through his daughter. Hence if granddaughter can prove that this mortgage was appraised as worthless by the appraisers of her mother's estate and mother's estate probated on that basis, the law cannot be retroactive and claim an inheritance tax on an estate that has developed value long after estate has been closed.

If Catheron's daughter died more than five years ago, statute of limitations acts as further bar to collection of inheritance tax on her estate now. Catheron's granddaughter cannot now be regarded as a legatee just because a doubtful asset has suddenly appreciated in value, for this new value is not a bequest under decedent's will but is attained because will gives authority to pay a debt of honor long overdue. Of course internal revenue collector will try to collect, but if he does I will lick him at every turn. For the same reason that federal inheritance taxes do not apply in this case, state inheritance cannot apply either.

Oh joy, oh joy, spring is here and I am so glad. How lovely to find somebody who can laugh, not to say sneer, at the Washingtonian wolves of finance! No charge for this advice. After all, I have some sporting blood and to prove it I shall even refrain from sending this telegram collect. Mac

"Isn't Absolom McPeake a perfect dear?" Nellie soliloquized. "He has told me everything I want to know without telling old lady Bray anything."

She sat down at her typewriter and rattled off a letter of thanks to Absolom McPeake. Incidentally she informed him that her mother had been dead five years and seven months and that her estate had never been probated, for two very sufficient reasons. One, because she had nothing to probate, and two, because she had taken the precaution some two years before her demise from a lingering illness formally to give, assign, transfer and set over unto her daughter, Nellie Catheron Cathcart, all of the right, title and interest which she had inherited from her father in and to that certain mortgage and deficiency judgment, et cetera. Nellie opined that the statute of limitations in her case was in perfect working order and that even the wolves at Washington could not, by any possible interpretation of the federal income tax or federal inheritance tax laws, construe a gift as an inheritance under a will.

Nellie now figured the interest at eight percent annually, compounded semiannually, on \$40,000 from August 10, 1882, to August 10, 1924. Having completed her computations, she was aware that in forty-two years her mother's gift had grown to be worth—oh, masterpiece of manipulation!—exactly \$1,078,000.

The author of this tale has figured this sum twice, so he knows the figures are correct. Nellie worked with an actuary and a machine that could add, subtract, multiply and divide; consequently she was enabled to check her

computations. She knew that her figures were not the product of a disordered imagination; she knew that if Hiram Butterworth's estate could afford to pay her that sum, it would, under the definite terms of the will, have to pay her. There was room for neither legal quibble nor compromise.

Upon completing her computations Nellie went into the vault, ostensibly to put her cash away, but in reality to shed a few briny tears of sympathy for Elmer Butterworth Clarke. Presently she bucked up and her practical mind leaped to the problem of ascertaining approximately the sum that a rapacious and predatory government would bite out of Elmer's share of the estate. When she had made a fairly accurate if rough estimate of this, she wept again. Upon recovering her emotions she deducted a further sum which might reasonably include the funeral expenses of Uncle Hiram, the probate fees, the appraiser's fees and the executor's fee, the specific bequest of ten thousand dollars, state and county taxes and ordinary debts of the estate. She was still further appalled at this total and wept a third time.

"Poor Elmer!" she sobbed. "To think that he was shot twice and gassed once fighting for his country, and now look what his country does to him! Oh darling, darling, your poor dear head is going to be all bloody, but if you'll only keep it unbowed, how much more your sweetheart is going to love you!"

Before she emerged from the vault she remembered the joke which fate, in her case, had played on the wolves of Washington. She at least was going to get \$1,078,000 out of the wreck and the howls of the wolves would be sweet music to her ears. They couldn't touch her with a buggy whip—as Elmer would have expressed it. Let fate do its worst to Elmer Clarke! What did Nellie Cathcart care? When the tumult and the shouting died, when the smoke of battle drifted from the scene, it would reveal Little Faithful, smiling, happy and confident, the possessor of Elmer Clarke and a bank-roll that a greyhound couldn't jump over.

On her way home that night Nellie stepped into the Bon Ton Toggery and bought six beautiful scarfs that cost her \$7.50 each. It was her intention to send them by parcel-post to Absolom McPeake. However, upon sober second thought, she decided to send him three only. The remaining three—the prettiest—she kept for Elmer Clarke.

Dear Nellie Cathcart!

Meanwhile Elmer Clarke's final period of service at the Smoke Shoppe was drawing to a close. During that two weeks one incident alone upthrust itself in Elmer's consciousness as a pleasant variation from the orderly procession of morning, noon and night.

On the third day following the great news, the editor of the Clarion fathered a thought truly bucolic. Remorse for the light manner in which he had once offended Elmer Clarke in his local brevities column now overtook him. What if Elmer should take a notion to back some smart metropolitan journalist in a new Pilarcitos paper and run the Clarion out of business! Horrible! A vacancy occurring on the Board of Trustees of the Union High School at this time, the Clarion came out with an editorial blast in black brevity with a three-column head, suggesting the election to the board of that sterling and distinguished citizen, Elmer Butterworth Clarke. The proponents of another candidate to the office, which was without salary, promptly pointed out the inadvisability of shattering an ancient and well established custom of electing to the school board only those men and women who had demonstrated their fitness to superintend the education of the young by providing the community with young to educate.

In an indefinite and roundabout way Elmer sensed a covert slam in this. At any rate it

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aroused all of his new-born antagonism to provincialism. Egged on by his friends, he decided to demonstrate to Pilarcitos that a young, unmarried man should, and would, function on that board or know the reason why. Immediately he announced himself as a candidate for the office. Parenthetically it is worthy of remark that he announced his intention to the public first and to Nellie Cathcart next.

Nellie was delighted, because this evidenced on Elmer's part a subconscious decision to continue to live in Pilarcitos and grow up with the town. She advised him to conduct a furious campaign against the mossbacks of the community, to prove that he had its interests at heart as truly as did his opponent, Henry Tichenor, who was the father of twelve children. Indeed, in the midst of her subtle blandishments she suddenly conceived the idea of making Elmer the leading citizen of the county, if not of the state.

In one illuminating instant she caught a vision that caused her to tremble. As the sole proprietor of Elmer's Place, she knew her man couldn't be elected town dog-catcher, but as president of the Pilarcitos Commercial Trust and Savings Bank she could elect him mayor at the primary election. From mayor to the state legislature, from the state legislature to Lieutenant-Governor, from that to Governor, to Congressman, to United States Senator, to the Vice-Presidency—to the White House!

"It's a big dream," she reflected, "but only those who have the ability to dream big dreams ever amount to anything. Just as easy to dream big dreams as little ones—and Ansel P. Moody has battened on this community long enough. Elmer is right. He's a pawnbroker, not a banker, and a banker should be the big man in any community. He should know better than any other man its needs, its aspirations and his duty toward it. When the time comes I'll tell Ansel P. Moody where he gets off. He'll sell his controlling interest in that bank to me at a fair price, or I'll start a new bank and run him and his competitor out of business in ten years."

With difficulty she repressed a cheer. "I'll open my bank with a hundred thousand dollars capital, fully paid up. I'll start with my own deposit of at least four hundred thousand dollars and I'll become a member of the Federal Reserve Bank, which no banker in this town has sense enough to become. I'll take over every loan Anse Moody has as it falls due. I'll cut the interest rate on those two bloodsuckers and I'll lend money on honesty, ability and industry; in the long run I'll consolidate the other two banks in this town with mine—I mean Elmer's and mine. Oh, Elmer darling, you're playing into my hand, and that means you'll wear out your life, not drag it out and rot it out! And nobody shall ever know who put up the money."

Her thoughts ran on and on. "And man is the natural leader of a household. His wife may be possessed of greater leadership than her husband, but she will never by word, sign or deed admit it if she be a wise woman. The greater her sense of leadership the more carefully should she guard her secret."

"A wife's place is in the home, but there she should be a queen, not a doormat. When she goes forth into the world she finds herself battling a man's world. She finds herself battling an immutable law—immutable because it is biological. Man may not have the brains, but he has the strength and the dominant will to leadership. He may conduct a disastrous campaign, but—he will conduct it nevertheless. If he be well advised—diplomatically—he will conduct a less disastrous campaign—particularly if he be a man like Elmer, free from self-conceit but brimming with self-esteem."

"Elmer darling, you're a strapping big boy but watch me wrap you around my little finger without bruising you and without letting you know you're being wrapped. Yesterday you admitted that, having dropped your burden, your backbone was beginning to stiffen a

little. It ought to be softened a little for my purpose and nothing will soften a backbone like an overdraft at the bank. I know. I've seen too many men give imitations of angle-worms in Anse Moody's private office."

After inculcating in Elmer such a sense of power as he had never known before, Nellie adroitly shifted the conversation to a subject which is never very far from pleasing to nine men out of ten, to wit, himself.

"Dearie," she charged suddenly, "do you know that suit you're wearing is beginning to look just a little bit shabby? I don't like to see my Elmer letting himself go like this. You should be the best dressed man in town—and usually you are. I'm afraid you've been trying too hard to save money to equip Elmer's Place."

He squeezed her hand gratefully.

"The idea of that business of my own obsessed me, Nellie," he admitted. "I have been scrimping more than usual lately. I wanted to get going—to be independent and make enough money to enable me to marry you and give you everything you desired."

"But, darling—I would have married you on far less. I would have been a help to you, not a source of expense."

"I know it, old lovable. But you were doing as well in your job as I was doing in mine, and it isn't a particularly striking evidence of unselfishness when a man asks a woman to give up financial independence to scrimp and save and sacrifice with him. I didn't want you to do that. My mother had to do that all her life and it hurt me. I swore that when I married, my wife should never have to say to me, 'Elmer, dear, may I have a dollar and a half to pay the gas bill?' or 'Elmer, I'd like eight dollars to buy a new hat.'"

"Nellie, that sort of thing is disgraceful. I want my wife to have, not an allowance, but more than half of the family treasure, provided she isn't a wild spendthrift. I want our funds deposited in a joint checking account and our married life based on mutual confidence. Also, I want you to have your own private checking account and I never want to know what you do with the money."

Nellie now squeezed his hand. "Never fear, Elmer, I'll have my own checking account and nobody shall ever know what I do with the money. I agree with you thoroughly there. But, Elmer, we're off our subject. I want you to go up to San Francisco and get yourself a complete wardrobe. Have you ever had a vacation, Elmer?"

He grinned humorously. "Any number of them, Nellie—when I was a boy in school. We had three months every summer. I used to enjoy myself working during my vacations skinning peaches in a fruit cannery."

"Poor dear! But haven't you had a real vacation since?"

"Once. When I was in France I had a four months' vacation in a hospital, but I've been on the job ever since."

"You must take a vacation, Elmer."

"I will—if you'll take it with me."

"I shall not. On a vacation I'd be a nuisance. You'd be working hard just trying to assure yourself that your wife was having a wonderful time—and I'm not ready to marry you yet, dear. Really, you must not bother yourself with a wife and her trunks and bags, not to mention your own."

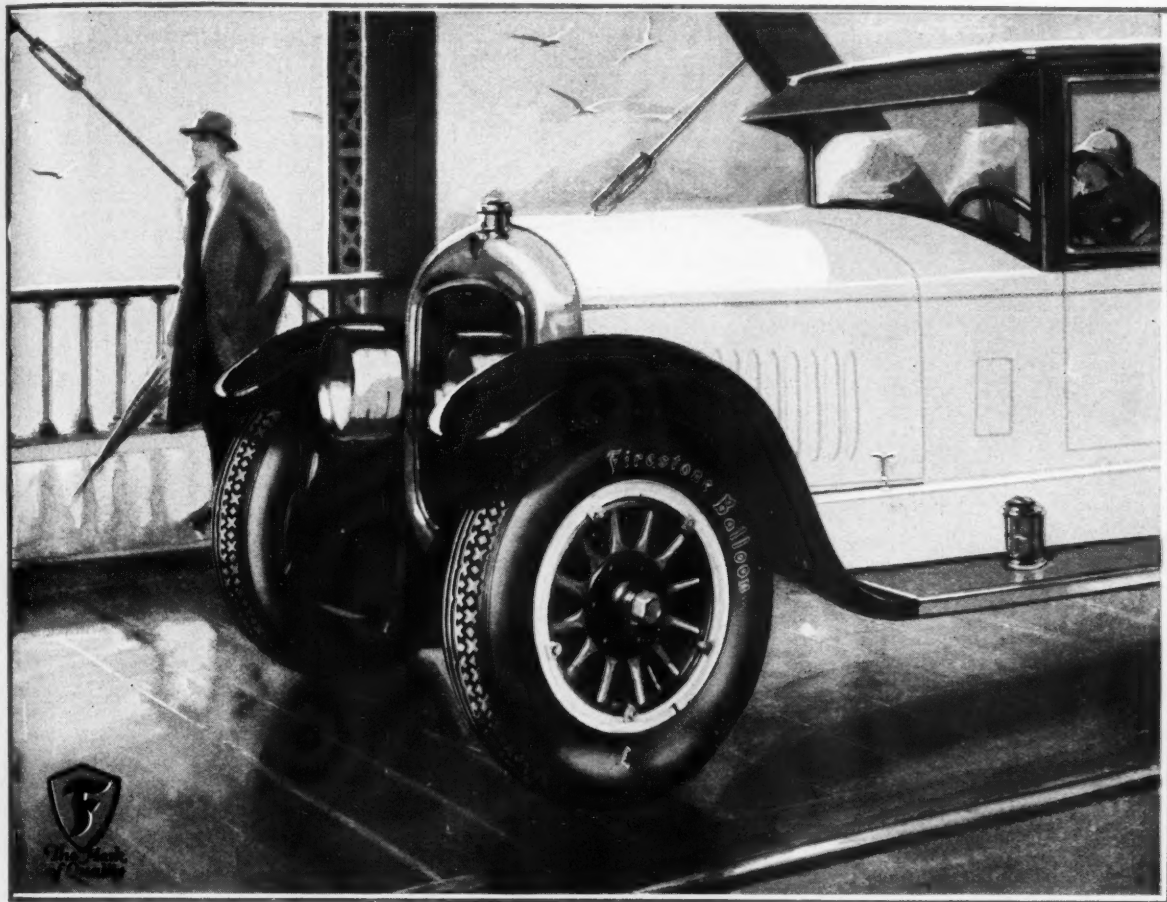
"Sure you can't be persuaded to change your mind and marry me before I go, Nellie?"

"Elmer Clarke, I'm not even engaged to you—yet. Remember that. I have already explained to you why."

He surrendered. "You're a mean woman, but I love you, so I suppose all of my life I'll be giving you your own way about everything. The only comfort I'll draw out of that will be the knowledge that you're wiser than a tree full of owls and probably know more about everything than I do."

"Omit the compliments, Mr. Clarke, please. Are you going on that vacation?"

"Yes—after I've cleaned up Henry Tichenor in this school election. By the way, I have a



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Experience shows that tire equipment is a decided safeguard—and that Firestone Full-Size Gum-Dipped Balloons are specially built for safety and sure response.

Gum-Dipping, the extra Firestone process, gives the extra strength for extra flexing strain.

The wide, resilient tread with its scientifically designed "safety angles" holds the car from swerving or skidding; so broad and yielding that it makes a "bridge" over ruts and uneven places.

The woman driver finds that confidence in Firestone Tire performance sets her mind at rest. She trusts the tires to respond quickly in an emergency, to hold true and to deliver long, economical mileage. The Firestone dealer will be glad to advise.

MOST MILES PER DOLLAR

Firestone

AMERICANS SHOULD PRODUCE THEIR OWN RUBBER *Harney Firestone*



HOURS WE SPENT TOGETHER SOMEWHERE, LONG AGO

(Letters from Lovers: II)

"I can't explain it even now—but you seemed to draw into the room with us an invisible company of elusive memories—memories of exquisite hours—and they seemed to be hours we spent together...somewhere...long ago. And the magic of them touched you with a mysterious fascination."

FROM HER DIARY

"It was different somehow—last evening—and beautiful. But why? I can't believe it was—the temple incense..."

THEY knew—those beautiful women of long ago—that the subtle fragrance of temple incense summoned a mood of romance to the room in which it burned. Through the centuries the same romantic mystery of it has come down to the women of today in Vantine's Temple Incense. In six delicate fragrances, it may be had at all drug and department stores.

Make the test for yourself. Send ten cents for six sample odors.

A. A. VANTINE & CO., INC.
71 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK



notion that, if elected, I'd like to be president of the board."

"You will be," Nellie assured him confidently. "As a man thinketh in his own heart, so is he."

"Maybe. By the way, Nellie, I've made one new resolution since that lawyer, McPeake, wired me I was a millionaire. I've decided not to cook my own breakfast hereafter and to refrain from eating my luncheons and dinners in restaurants. I've engaged a smart gentleman of color to look after me and the dogs. His name is Jasper and he swings a mean skillet; he can butte, drive a car and play the banjo."

"Can he press clothes without burning them?"

"Says he can."

"Good! Elmer, I think you ought to buy yourself another nice present. You've been good for ever so long and you deserve it."

"Agreed on every point. What would you suggest, Nellie?"

"A nice town car with a specially built body, equipped for touring."

"I'd like a Bolles-Joyce, but the thought of the cost frightens me."

"Would the possession of a Bolles-Joyce automobile give you real pleasure?"

"Next to possessing you, Nellie, it would give me the real thrill of my life."

"Then buy one. You can afford to."

"But it will cost about sixteen thousand dollars f. o. b. Los Angeles or San Francisco."

"Give them half. Your credit is good for the other half. Give yourself one smashing thrill if it's the last act of your life, Elmer."

Instantly Elmer had a vision of glorious little Nellie in a Bolles-Joyce. In the quaint *patois* of our own United States, he was sold on the spot.

"You'll want a new house, of course," Nellie rambled on, "if you intend to remain in Pilarcitos long enough to complete your term of office as chairman and member of the board of trustees of the Union High School. What do you want for your bungalow and lot?"

"Ten thousand dollars. Got a customer for me, Nellie?"

"Yes, but I'm afraid my customer cannot meet your terms. I know a party who *might* be induced to buy your house if you will accept two thousand dollars down, with a first mortgage for two years on the remainder at seven percent."

"Sold!" The word popped out of Elmer's mouth in much the same manner he formerly employed when giving orders to his patron.

"I'll try to work up the deal," the practical Nellie replied. "I make no definite promise, but within a month I'll have an answer."

"I suppose you'll want a commission, Nellie," Elmer suggested with what Anse Moody would have termed ill-concealed humorosity.

"Not from you," she replied breathlessly. They were lunching at the time in a booth at the Palace Grill. Nellie glanced around, saw that for the moment they were unobserved. "Kiss me!" she commanded fiercely.

Elmer dutifully obeyed. "Now go forth and make your fight for school trustee," Nellie ordered. "See to it that you win. If you're defeated I'll cry."

Having nothing else to do that afternoon, Elmer concluded to kill two birds with one stone. He resolved to go fishing. En route to the stream and back he planned to visit half a dozen farmers and solicit their support at the coming school election.

His expedition to fish for trout was not a conspicuous success, but that part of it which had to do with fishing for votes was eminently satisfactory. He received assurances of support from every voter upon whom he called, and four out of the six expressed profound satisfaction at this signal evidence of Elmer's intention, despite his recently acquired million, to remain in Pilarcitos, take an active interest in civic affairs and grow up with the county. In fact, one of them went so far as to hit him

a hearty swat on the back and say: "Elmer, you're all right. No swelled head about you. I'm for you all the way! You're just plain folks like the rest of us an' your money hasn't spoiled you a mite."

The accolade brought on a coughing fit, but Elmer did not mind. He was beginning to discover, in these piping times of peace, the true inwardness of something he had gone to war to fight for, and that was the gentle art of making the world safe for democracy. In that moment he caught a glimpse of the class consciousness and class resentment, sleeping perhaps but never dead, even in a free republic. He knew he must be careful not to appear any different hereafter from what he had always been; that jealous minds in back of keen eyes would be quick to attribute to him now the ideals and impulses which would be their own did they but stand in his shoes.

He was thoughtful and subdued as he drove into his garage late that evening.

His newly acquired person of color, Jasper, came out of the kitchen and met Elmer as the latter was locking the garage door.

"Dey's a young lady waitin' foh you, suh, in de parlor," he confided. "She done call about foh o'clock an' when I told her you-all had gone fishin' she said she'd set aroun' an' wait twell you got back."

"Who is she, Jasper?"

Jasper handed him a card, which read:

MISS DORIS GATEWOOD
Special Correspondent
THE AMERICAN WEEKLY
New York City
245 Rampart Boulevard
Los Angeles, Calif.
Telephone 067-978

"Oh Lord!" Elmer groaned. "So I'm still news! What sort of person is she, Jasper?"

Jasper grinned. "Shuah ain't hard to look at, Mistah Clarke."

"Well, you tell the lady I have just returned and will see her as soon as I have had an opportunity to clean up."

Some ten minutes later, when Elmer entered his little parlor, in which no woman had sat since his mother's funeral, he found Miss Doris Gatewood seated at the ancient square piano softly playing a Strauss waltz. At his approach she turned gracefully on the revolving stool and advanced to greet him with outstretched hand and a shy, embarrassed smile. There was about her a charming combination of frankness and shyness which quite robbed the friendliness of her glance, her smile and her hand-shake of a faint note of boldness.

Elmer, who was hypersensitive to first impressions, noted all this and told himself it was, perhaps, characteristic of lady correspondents. He had gathered an impression from his reading that all writers were a bit jolly, unconventional and bohemian.

"So glad to meet you, Mr. Clarke!" the girl announced. Her deep, mellifluous tones seemed to reverberate in the room and challenge the dying voice of the last note she had struck on Elmer's old piano. "I am Doris Gatewood."

Elmer bowed over the outstretched hand. "Jasper gave me your card, Miss Gatewood; consequently I can guess the reason for your call. Please be seated." He indicated a horse-hair sofa and sat down opposite. "I'm sorry you've had to wait so long for me."

"Oh, I haven't been a bit lonely, Mr. Clarke! I've been playing with your fox-terrier, and when he ran away I played the piano. I found some books and I've been reading also."

"You did quite right to make yourself at home, Miss Gatewood."

"You're very kind. By the way, Mr. Clarke, if you'll forgive me for mentioning it, your piano has a wonderful tone, but it needs tuning."

"I wasn't aware of that. Nobody has opened the old ruin since my mother passed away over five years ago."

"And you live quite alone?"

He nodded, the while he appraised her with the impersonal air of good breeding which was

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Mr. Shirley enrolled, studying evenings. In just a few months he accepted a position as artist for a paper company, at a better salary. He's been climbing steadily since—read his letter:

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his natural heritage. He decided she was the most dashing young woman he had ever seen. In fact, she was more beautiful than Nellie Cathcart—and Elmer had thought that an impossibility for any woman.

Perhaps, he told himself, that was due to the undeniable "air" of her more than to superiority of sheer physical beauty. Nellie, too, had an air, but it was natural, while Miss Doris Gatewood appeared to have acquired hers. She was dressed in a manner which Elmer could not have described; like all of his sex all he knew about women's clothes was that they looked stunning or indifferent. Miss Gatewood's wardrobe then and there in evidence was neither stunning nor indifferent, and Elmer found in his rag-bag of a mind a phrase that appeared to describe her and her clothes. She was well-groomed.

Her chic little tan hat—it was a Paris model—gave her a saucy air and fitted her face. Her hair was bobbed and as black and glistening as a raven's wing. Her skin was the kind one loves to touch, but whether her glorious coloring was natural or artificial was beyond Elmer's ability to decide. She wore a smart tailored suit of brownish tweed and somewhat mannish cut, brown silk stockings and cunning little brown brogues with tasseled tongues. Her shirt-waist, with a tailored collar, was immaculately white and very plain. She wore Colorado Charley's handsome brown silk tie; her gloves were brown and her eyes were brown, radiant, challenging, alight with interest.

"She's a darby!" thought Elmer Butterworth Clarke. "Brains to spare. Must have, to be a special correspondent of the American Weekly. I've heard writers like her make a hundred or two a week, sometimes more. That's why she can afford such nice clothes. But she isn't overdone, either. What Nellie would call good taste is the key-note of her get-up."

Miss Doris Gatewood on her part was, without appearing to do so, making a swift appraisal of Elmer Clarke. "Isn't he nice-looking?" she asked herself. "And he has nice manners too, for a hick. He must have had a nice mother. He's small town but not a Reuben, and he's shy and sensitive. Hello, he wears a silver service button in his lapel. He's been to the war and been wounded. Right leg, doubtless. I notice he favors it just a little. He buys his suits ready-made. Much too much of the collegiate atmosphere to the one he's wearing. His tie is a trifle flamboyant, but that's what they're wearing lately."

"He seems reserved and dignified. Bet he's an old-fashioned boy, takes off his hat in elevators and gives up his seat in street-cars to old ladies. Good Western type and not fresh. He's taking me in from heels to hair, but his eyes are as innocent and free from desire as a baby's. Elmer, you're a nice boy and I like you. Now to make you like me!"

She fished a note-book and a short pencil from her pocket and smiled across at him apologetically. "Of course, Mr. Clarke, I know I'm boring you to the point of warm tears," she began. "But really, you look so kind I can't feel as contrite about it as I ought. Besides, I make my living by boring people—making them talk when they do not want to and putting words into their mouths when they refuse to talk."

"What do you want to know?" he challenged. "Oh, all about the fortune that's been left you by the uncle you've never seen! I'm ordered to interview you and get a snappy story on how it feels to be a poor man today and a millionaire tomorrow. I'd like to have some expression from you as to your ideas on the obligations of wealth. Does money make for great happiness, or vice versa? What do you expect to do with your money and when? Are you going to marry the one girl who has been waiting for you—or is there one girl?"

"That's out," he reminded her. "It's

nobody's business whether there's one girl or two or a dozen—and if there were I should not discuss them."

"Tipped a foul that time," Miss Gatewood went on, flushing prettily. "Still, one never can tell whether the patient will talk on that subject or not, so usually we ask to find out. Pardon. I'll try to stick to my knitting hereafter. Now, then—Mr. Clarke, what is your man Friday cooking for dinner?"

"It smells like corned beef and cabbage to me. This is Thursday, isn't it?"

Miss Gatewood nodded brightly. "And potatoes boiled with their jackets on?" she queried with eager curiosity. He nodded. "Then you're as plebeian as I am," she challenged. "I adore plain food and I'm famished."

To himself Elmer said: "I suppose I'll be a dog if I don't invite her to eat some of it. Confound it, I think she expects to be invited, or wants to be. That's just like these bohemian newspaper women." He turned to his visitor. "I should like very much to invite you to dinner, Miss Gatewood, but—"

"I'd adore to come," she interrupted before he could cloak his invitation with more buts. "During dinner we can have a nice, long, comfortable interview."

"Well, Miss Gatewood, if you can manage without a chaperon, I can."

"I'm sure you're not at all a dangerous person, Mr. Clarke."

"I'm sure you are!" Elmer came back at her just like that.

She blushed at the compliment and proved herself equally fast by retorting: "I see you are not a stranger to risks, Mr. Clarke. I had two brothers in the service. One was killed at Soissons and the other was gassed. He hasn't been very well since. He lives with me in Los Angeles."

"Indeed! Well, I had my taste of phosgen gas too. My lungs are still a little ticklish, but I'm slowly outgrowing the effect. Pardon me, please, while I tell Jasper to set a place for you and add a few fancy touches in your honor."

That was a very delightful if unconventional dinner. Miss Gatewood was charming. It was her business to be charming and she knew her business. Her charm received a considerable impetus, however, from the charm which she extracted from Elmer. Under the ameliorating influence of her delightful personality, Elmer was in perfect form. He was interviewed without being aware of it, nor did Doris Gatewood have to interview him. Everything she wanted to know came out naturally in their conversation. In fact, the lady almost forgot she was playing a part.

She was returning to Los Angeles on the train which came through Pilarcitos at ten-thirty that night. After dinner she suggested that, unless Elmer had something better to do, they might kill time by going to a movie. Since Nellie was dining out that night and Elmer had nothing better to do than escort his new-found acquaintance to the movie, he declared he could think of nothing more delightful. So they went to see a thriller, and once during an exciting moment of the photoplay Miss Gatewood seized Elmer's hand impulsively and clung to it, apparently quite oblivious of what she was doing.

After dinner Elmer walked with her to the train and got her little traveling case out of the checking station in the depot. Before she boarded the train she had exacted a promise from him to call upon her and her brother at their Los Angeles home and have dinner with them. Elmer said he expected to be in Los Angeles in a few days to buy a Bolles-Joyce automobile, and would take that opportunity to renew an acquaintance so happily begun.

Upon arrival in Los Angeles, Mae, alias Doris Gatewood, reported to Colorado Charley that the fish was on the line; that nothing now remained to do save get out the net and land him.

Doris may think she has Elmer safely hooked, but there is still Nellie to be reckoned with—and that capable young woman plays a lone hand with dramatic results Next Month

A new triumph in electric cleaning— "POSITIVE AGITATION"



"POSITIVE AGITATION" as accomplished in the new Hoover is beating—the time-tested requirement of thorough rug-cleaning—reduced to an exact scientific process. Such beating, instead of being concentrated in a few violent strokes as with the carpet-beater or broom, is modified by The Hoover into a series of swiftly repeated air-cushioned taps. This is achieved by means of a totally new appliance—the exclusive and patented Hoover Agitator illustrated here. The floor and floats it on a cushion of air while the Agitator gently flutters out all the embedded dirt as the strong suction draws all the dirt into the dust-tight bag.

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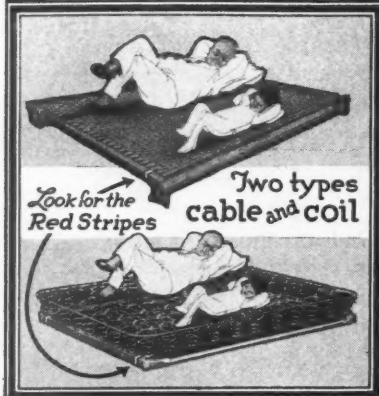
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The Man Who Learned to Play (Continued from page 71)

congenial company to be with. Probably these Continental countries were pretty much alike anyway.

So he attached himself, rather in the manner of a forlorn but faithful watch-dog, to the Sawyers and trailed them—trailed is the proper word—across England and France and down into Switzerland. It was in Switzerland that the bond was dissolved—by them. Through being so bored himself, he bored them. As Mrs. Sawyer said privately to her husband, he seemed so plaintively neutral, so persistently given to hunting for something which he never succeeded in finding, that he got on her nerves. She liked him but he was a barnacle and a limpet and the limit; and with the best intentions in the world he was in a fair way to spoil Europe for her. They found more or less plausible reasons for separating from him.

After spending three days in Rome—two days in lackadaisical sightseeing and one in mooning about his hotel; it rained that day—Mr. Youtsey sent a cablegram notifying Estrella that he would be starting back in the early part of the ensuing week from Naples. The boat was crowded and he divided a stateroom with a rather ladylike young man who bought antiques for a New York importer and spoke a language which, while having an English base, was for the most part an alien language so far as Mr. Youtsey was concerned. On one point, though, he was entirely understandable. He despised America and wished he were able to spend his whole life, instead of merely a part of it, elsewhere. It was a strange point of view for a native-born citizen of our country to be holding, so Mr. Youtsey told himself. As for him, the old U. S. A. would look pretty good. It did. He told the customs inspector so on the dock, tendering a cigar.

The returned one didn't tarry long in New York. He had Hobbsville in his blood and Hobbsville was mooring to his homesick soul. He yearned to be where there always had been something interesting for a fellow to do instead of rambling around from this cathedral to that art gallery or from this palace to that battlefield or what not. He arrived on a smoking hot summer morning to find that, sure enough, Estrella was in Colorado and that Titus Junior had taken the runabout and with a chum had departed to the Michigan Peninsula to be away for three weeks. There was nobody to greet him out on Osmus Avenue.

Opportunity of rescue from the solitude of the big echoing barn of a house came on the second day following. An awfully jolly group of men of his own age or thereabouts—Joslyn the wholesale grocer, O'Brien the undertaker, Schabel the furniture man, Judge Deakins of the county court and one or two more—were making up a crowd to go camping on Lady River Lake and now that he had nothing on his mind but his hair and nothing in his pockets but plenty of that easy money and nothing to do except sit under an electric fan and tear off the coupons, they gave him a cordial invite to club in with them.

The outing was to be for two weeks but at the end of the first week Mr. Youtsey supplied plausible explanations why he ought to be getting back home again. For one thing, he didn't feel well. This was true. Physically nothing ailed him, but he decided privately that a fellow had to be brought up on this sort of thing really to enjoy it and the trouble with him probably was that he'd started in too late to learn. Such was his inward diagnosis of a failure to get into the spirit of the trip. He flattered himself he could take a joke as well as the next one, but what the rest of them could see in O'Brien's stories to laugh themselves sick over was past him. And they setting so much store on that everlasting poker game of theirs and swigging all that cheap moonshine which Joslyn had dug up somewhere, getting silly drunk really. Why, meeting them out in the woods with the bridle off, you'd hardly have known them for the

same serious, sober business men and professional men that they were at home—and one a judge on the bench and he almost the loosest talking one of the lot, excusing O'Brien, who certainly did take the cake in that direction.

Then the idea of a grown-up man with responsibilities and a family and all, putting on a dirty old shirt and a pair of gum boots and rowing a heavy skiff to and fro in the broiling sun all day in order to catch maybe a little black bass about ten inches long or a string of measly little perch worth about a quarter at the market; letting on like he enjoyed it, too, and coming back and bragging about what a fisherman he was and eating a mess of greasy food and then diving for a place around the table and playing dollar limit until nearly daylight—well, it beat him, it certainly did beat him!

Looking back on it, he recalled just one phase of the excursion wherefrom he had derived a bit of pleasure and that bit had been short-lived. Checking up on the provisions and the bills, he had been able to find out and to prove that the cook they'd hired was skinning them right and left. It was a satisfaction to show by the figures where there still should be on hand such-and-such stores bought at such-and-such prices, but they weren't on hand, not by a jugful they weren't, and the prices all wrong, too. The others, though, had only jeered it off. "What do we care? Give poor old cookie a chance. He only gets a whack at this gang once a year. Never mind so much bookkeeping, let's all take a snort. 'Cause 'nother little drink won't do us any harm!"

In one regard, though, the experience had profited him. At least he would know enough hereafter to pick out the right fellows for companions on a camping trip—that was, conceded he ever decided to go camping again, which was doubtful.

Through succeeding days and weeks there followed the vain and somewhat pitiable spectacle of a born hustler, lately retired, endeavoring to reclaim the tastes and essences of a frittered youth; the upshot of which further effort being an interview between the elder Youtsey and the juvenile Youtsey on a September afternoon.

After sundry hemmings and hawings the older man got under way. "Junior," he said, with almost a pleading air, certainly with a diffident one, "here this last month or so I've been mulling over something—something which concerns you, sort of, seeing as I've figured you into it."

"Shoot!" bade his son. His manner, on the other hand, had about it more than a suggestion of a lofty indifference. He believed that being short and snappy with others was a mark of social and intellectual distinction.

"Well, it's like this: You don't seem to be taking on so very much over completing your education. Maybe you figure you've had enough learning. Maybe you have. As to that I wouldn't say. What say, then, you chop it off short right where it is and go into business?"

"Just what kind of business?" asked Junior, showing a quick suspicion and sitting up straighter in the porch chair where he had been lolling.

"Well, some kind of a business that I could—that we could go into together; that's what I've been thinking about recently." He hurried along, wistfully intent on checking many interruptions before they were uttered. "For instance now, there's the J. W. Blossom broom factory out here on Eades Street by the depot." At this the collegian gave a swift start as though some noxious insect had stung him. "It's on the market. There'll be a sheriff's sale, first thing you know. The heirs want to get shut of it before it eats its head off laying idle. Tubby sure, it's run down considerable since old man Blossom died, but the price oughter be right and it could be built up into something nice and money-making, give it the right kind of handling."

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Model 30, six-tube ONE
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and batteries, but with
battery cable, \$55.00



Model 20 Compact, five-
tube Three Dial receiver.
Less tubes and batteries, but
with battery cable, \$60.00

They said

it would come

—and it's here!

DO YOU remember when the prophets were saying that some day there would be a radio set as easy to operate as switching on an electric light?

It's here—it has only ONE Dial—it's an Atwater Kent.

You don't have to figure out combinations. You don't have to hunt for the station you want. You don't have to do *anything* but move that ONE Dial with the light touch of the fingers of one hand.

How fast are your fingers? That's the speed of operating an Atwater Kent Receiver—with ONE Dial. The same precision in

design and manufacture which has made everything so simple for you has again improved those other qualities—tone, and the ability to shut out undesired stations.

You are missing a great deal if the great artists who are broadcasting to millions this fall are not being heard in your home. Let an Atwater Kent dealer show you how easily you can make your selection of programs—with an Atwater Kent ONE Dial Receiver—and how natural the programs sound through an Atwater Kent Radio Speaker.

EVERY SUNDAY EVENING:—The Atwater Kent Radio Hour brings you the stars of opera and concert, in Radio's finest program. Hear it at 9:15 Eastern Time, 8:15 Central Time, through:

WEAF . . . New York	WEAR . . . Cleveland	WCAZ . . . Pittsburgh
WJAR . . . Providence	WCCO Mpls.-St. Paul	WGR . . . Buffalo
WEEI . . . Boston	WTAG . . . Worcester	WOC . . . Davenport
WRC . . . Washington	WGN . . . Chicago	KSD . . . St. Louis
WSAI . . . Cincinnati	WFI . . . Philadelphia	WWJ . . . Detroit

Prices slightly higher from the Rockies west, and in Canada

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The same bevel edge - the same rigidity as an old fashioned razor!



BECAUSE we give Ever-Ready a keener edge, it gives you smoother, quicker, more joyous shaves.

Structurally Ever-Ready is like a hollow-ground straight razor. It has the same bevel edge. It has the same rigidity. And because it's scientifically ground, it has the keenest edge in the world!

See how thick and substantial the Ever-Ready blade is. Notice the sturdy steel backbone. Ever-Ready won't bend or give. It meets the whiskers at right angles and shaves clean as a whistle. It's the perfect blade!

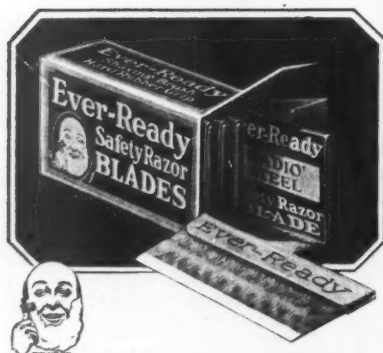
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Ever-Ready is the finest razor human ingenuity can design. It's the most scientifically designed, most carefully made. No matter how old your Ever-Ready Razor is, if it doesn't satisfy you 100%, we'll replace it. Send it to

AMERICAN SAFETY RAZOR CORP.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Ever-Ready Razors and Blades are sold everywhere

Ever-Ready Blades



"I've—I've been looking into the proposition in a sort of casual, offhanded way. And I got the thought that if you and me went cahoots and took it over, lock, stock and barrel, why, working together, shoulder to shoulder, as the fellow says, we could maybe rastle it back into shape again. Naturally there might not be no whole mint of money in it, although as to that you couldn't say beforehand, but what I'm mostly banking on is that it'd give you a show to get your teeth set into business ways and business habits, and on top of that I guess I could get my share of fun and excitement out of it, plugging up holes and damming off leaks and stopping waste expenses and all. You could go in as a full partner—mind you, full partner. Yes, sir, you could be the real boss, with me sort of throwing in a little advice now and then about steering the shebang along. How does that strike you, boy?"

But the boy seemed not so much struck as he seemed, by the mere prospect of it, stricken. Rallying promptly, he proceeded to cure his irritating parent of so idle a delusion. Apparently he regarded abrupt surgery as merciful surgery; at any rate, he chose words that had cutting edges on them.

"Not a chance!" With almost an irate intensity he began the scornful rejoinder. "Not a chance in a hundred million. In the first place, whether I decide to cut out the college racket this fall or stick till I graduate, it's a cinch that when I go into business it won't be here in this backwoods burg. Me, I'm getting sicker of the sight of it every minute. And I'm not going to waste my brains on some run-down wreck of a two-by-four broom factory, either. My idea is that I'll put in a year or two looking around and then maybe call on you for some backing and go in with a couple of pals of mine in the East—in the bond-selling business in Wall Street. Yes sir, when I do get ready to jump in, New York is the puddle where I'm going to jump—not Hobbsville or any dump that looks like it.

"And say"—he warned to his reproof—"where do you get this stuff about going into business yourself? Didn't you make your pile and sell out at a fancy price? You did—not six months ago. And now you want to go ramming right back into the rut and on a one-horse scale at that. I tell you right now that, for one, I'm dead against it. And Estrella'll be against it, too, when she gets home and I tell her about this. Weren't you always saying that you wanted to quit work and sit back and take things easy? Well, you had your wish—you quit and you're taking things easy and enjoying yourself. Let it go at that. That's where I stand, once for all."

Mr. Youtsey was like quite a few of his class over the land. Stiff enough when occasion required it in his dealings with underlings who happened to be the sons and daughters of other men, he never yet had made any real headway at swaying the contrarwise opinions of his own son and his own daughter. To him they were not his underlings; in all things except in years they were his superiors. He had made them so—by coddling and pampering them in their childhood, by spoiling them outrageously in their adolescence, by deferring to their whims as they neared their imperious majorities. His was not the egotism of the average wealth-builder, for, as he figured it, not brains but muscles and stubbornness and good luck had put him where he was.

For Estrella with her silky-smooth arrogance and for Junior with his toploftical regal assumption of a right to dictate he had a tremendous reverence. They knew about books and art and important things. He only knew mattress stuffings and such-like trifles.

The little resigned grunt he gave when Junior had concluded was a requiem for a fond plan that had expired, by violence, immediately following birth. He buried that dead baby of his right then and there. If he mourned its passing, nobody took notice.

There was a middle-aged man, a millionaire thrice over, who bought a membership in an

expensive sportsmen's club in North Carolina but let the fall slip by without going down for the shooting. There was such a man, in fact the selfsame man, who went in December to Florida for the winter but came sheepishly back for no valid reasons early in January when Hobbsville was shank-deep in snow and slush; a man who used up six weeks of the spring in a restless, aimless motor trip through the blossomy Southwest, traveling alone except for the chauffeur and except for the wayfaring pedestrians to whom he gave lifts along the roads; a man who spent part of a miserable summer at a resort hotel on Lake Michigan, where he learned to hate bridge games and the very sight of a pair of white flannel trousers. And there was, upwards of a year later, a nervous man who walked, on an autumn morning, into the office of the leading physician of Hobbsville and demanded to know what in thunder it was that ailed him and how he could get rid of it. He had been there before, several times. This time he behaved as though he were beginning to be desperate. Yet he was meek and submissive about it.

Doctor Baskette grunted. He was one of the masterful, grunting kind.

"Huh!" He broke in on the caller's fretful and somewhat rambling preamble. "Let's get down to the point: you're in substantially the same fix that you were in the last time I went over you—is that what you're driving at?"

"Well, yes and no. I feel all right bodily but—"

"Oh, you're all right there. I don't know three men of your age that are sounder than you are—physically, I mean. And you haven't turned hypochondriac. That's one phase of it you've escaped."

"But I keep on having that kind of let-down, no-count, depressed kind of feeling inside of me, like as if I was all helpless and worthless and rusted out and going to seed. And I can't seem to get set on anything. It didn't use to be this way with me. Used to be that when I tackled a chore I'd put her through by main strength and awkwardness. And it used to be when I worked from right after breakfast till bedtime that I always had time and the craving to do anything on the side that I was a mind to. But now, when I ain't got anything to do regular, I can't seem to get steamed up over a job like I done once. And here just lately I catch myself worrying over tridles—little piffing things like household bills and garage bills. Now, why should I pester myself about 'em? But I do. That's the trouble—I do pester."

"Didn't I tell you you'd have to get interested in affairs—take plenty of outdoor exercise, find yourself some occupation and some diversion to mix in with it?"

"Yes, you did, but dog-gone it all, doc—" "Hold on. I made you join that new country club of ours. It's not much of a club, I'll admit, but it's a start. I told you to buy yourself a set of golf-clubs and go to it, didn't I? But I haven't seen you on the links in four or five months. Why not?"

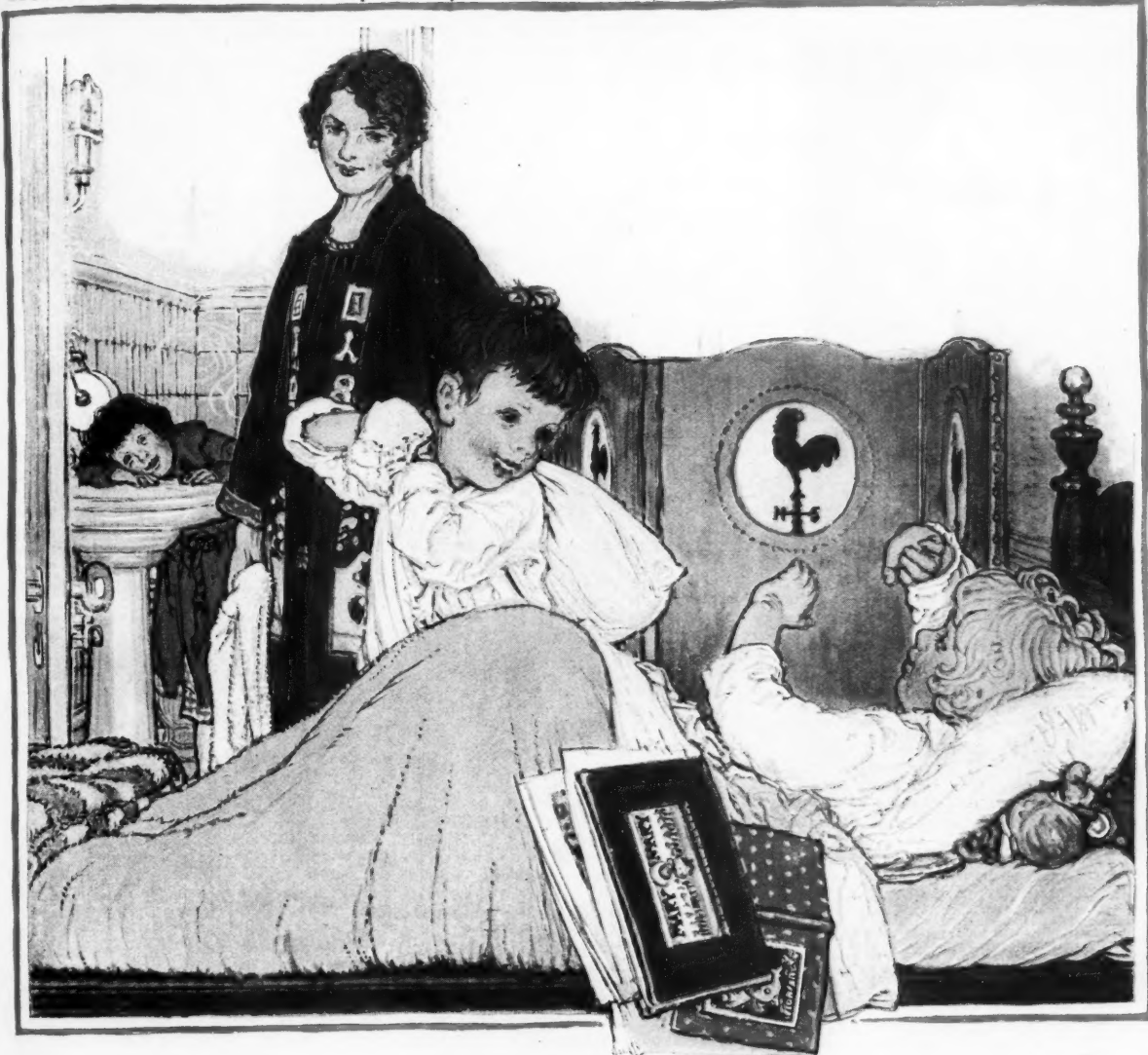
"Say, look here, you take a man like me that's always had some really important concern on his hands. And you start in to beating a blamed little gutty-percha ball around over a vacant cow-pasture with a runty kid maybe only ten or twelve years old standing alongside bossing you and telling you how to make a lick right and snickering behind your back when you make it wrong—well, it seemed like to me that it was all just so much blamed childish foolishness. I just couldn't get interested. I tried but—"

"Motoring? I mentioned that as an alternative. It's better than nothing."

"I'll tell you about this motoring business, the way I sized it up. What's the good of going somewhere if you ain't got anything to do after you get there except pump up the tires and go somewhere else?"

"Oh, thunder! It's the principle of the thing you don't grasp."

"Yes, I do too, doc. I can grasp her all right."



Mothers can depend upon this safe, soft tissue!

Absolutely safe for children. Kind to sensitive skins. Hygienically pure. All these qualities are in ScotTissue. Ask your doctor.

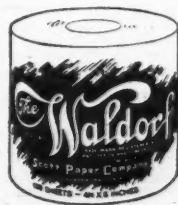
For years, mothers have demanded soothing softness, quick absorbency and immaculate cleanness in toilet tissue. They now have these qualities in ScotTissue, exactly as mothers prefer, for the comfort and well-being of their families.

ScotTissue comes to you wrapped and sealed in dust-proof rolls, untouched and untainted. 1000 sheets in a big, economical roll.

ScotTissue belongs in every modern bathroom. Its very presence indicates an appreciation for those special refinements which reflect a pride in home appointments. No need for conversation—just say "ScotTissue" to your storekeeper.



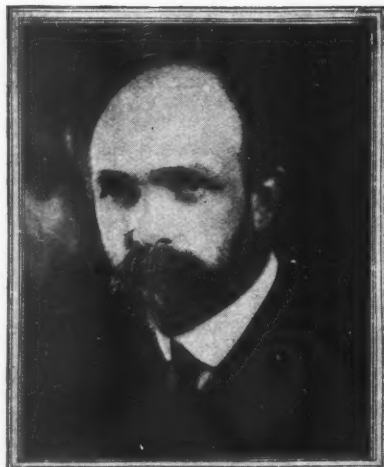
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How to Speak and Write Masterly English

Thousands of persons make little mistakes in their everyday English and don't know it. As a result of thousands of tests, Sherwin Cody found that the average person is only 61% efficient in the vital points of English. In a five-minute conversation or in an average one-page letter, from five to fifty errors will appear. It is surprising how many experienced stenographers fail in spelling such common words as "business," "abbreviate," etc. It is astonishing how many business men say "between you and I" instead of "between you and me," and use "who" for "whom," and mispronounce the simplest words. Few know whether to use one or two "c's" or "m's" or "r's," whether to spell words with "le" or "el," and when to use commas in order to make their meaning absolutely clear.

A REMARKABLE INVENTION

Mr. Cody has specialized in English for the past twenty years. But instead of going along in the old way he has applied scientific principles to teaching the correct use of our language. He made tens of thousands of tests of his various devices before inventing his present method. In all his tests he found that the trouble with old methods is that points learned do not stick in the mind. In school you were asked to remember rules, and if you forgot the rules you never could tell what was right and what was wrong. For years Mr. Cody has studied the problem of creating instinctive habits of using good English. As a result of his experience he evolved his wonderful new

SELF-CORRECTING METHOD

A patent was granted to Mr. Cody on his unique device, and now he places it at your disposal. This invention is simple, fascinating, time-saving, and incomparably efficient. You do the lesson given on any page, then you see exactly how Mr. Cody himself would correct it. You mark your errors and check them in the first blank column. Next week you try that page again, on the second unmarked sheet, correct your errors, and check them in the second column. You see at a glance what you have learned and what you have failed to remember, until you have reached the 100% point in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and expression.

ONLY 15 MINUTES A DAY

A remarkable advantage of Mr. Cody's course is the speed with which these habit-forming practice drills can be carried out. You can write the answers to fifty questions in 15 minutes and correct your work in five minutes more. You waste no time in going over the things you already know. Your efforts are automatically concentrated on the mistakes you are in the habit of making, and, through constantly being shown the right way, you soon acquire the correct habit in place of the incorrect habit. There are no rules to memorize. There is no tedious copying. There is no heart-breaking drudgery.

FREE—BOOK ON ENGLISH

A command of polished and effective language denotes education and shows culture. It wins friends and favorably impresses those with whom you come in contact. In business and in social life correct English gives you added advantages and better opportunities, while poor English handicaps you more than you will ever realize. And now, in only 15 minutes a day—in your own home—you can actually see yourself improve by using the 100% self-correcting method.

Write today for our new free book, "How to Speak and Write Masterly English." It explains Mr. Cody's method in detail. Merely mail the coupon or a postal card.

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But I can't appear to keep my holt on her. Now you remember you advised I should mess in with local politics."

"I did, I surely did. I told you, and I repeat it, that the sanitary conditions in this town are a blot and a stench and a disgrace on any community that claims to be civilized. Look at our infant mortality rate as compared with other towns this size! Look at our garbage dumps! Or smell 'em, that'll be sufficient. I told you how I'd railed at the alleged health department and at the city hall gang until I'd made a nuisance of myself. It was like butting my head against a stone wall. I told you, though, that a man like you—a man who had experience as an organizer and an executive, a man who'd achieved something—might make some headway where I had failed; might perform a real public service. And what did you do?"

"On my suggestion you hopped gaily in and took the presidency of my poor little struggling Health League and then all of a sudden after three months you up and resigned and walked out on us one night. It's a good thing for you I was away on my vacation when you did it or I'd have told you something."

"But blame it all, doc, we wasn't getting anywhere. Just talk, talk, talk, and nobody willing to take orders. When I was in business and I gave an order, either the fellow did it or I fired him. It was discouraging, that's what it was, absolutely discouraging. And everybody nearly finding fault, everybody nearly with an ax to grind, everybody toting a grudge or nursing a prejudice or something. And no heads or tails to anything."

"I didn't expect you to make much of a gain against sentiment for a while—I warned you of that. But I did want you to have some stimulating enthusiasm in something somewhere. That was partly my intent. Now listen here to me, Titus Youtsey—I'm going to talk plainer to you than I have any time before. You're in a bad way. You're the victim of a lifelong vice. This country is full of victims of the same disease that you're a victim of—hopeless cases, most of them. And you won't cure yourself—or you can't, which comes to the same thing. And you won't let me cure you. Your trouble is the same one that made Jack a dull boy—all work and no play. He must have been dam' dull! Nobody caught you young and taught you how to loaf."

"Hold on—I know what you're about to say. Don't say it! You want to try to tell me that loafing is a curse. It is, if you overdo it, but it's a blessing if you do it in moderation. And the same thing goes for hard work. They ought to be sanely mixed—so much of one, so much of the other. You have to learn how to work and you have to learn how to play and they have to catch you young to teach you. But you neglected one side of your education and overdid the other. And now you want me to save you. I've prescribed what I thought was a remedy, or at least a tonic, and you throw my prescription into the gutter and come whining back. Well, I'm through. I'll just say this much and it's my last word to you: Go get into some sort of business—any sort of business even if it's shining shoes!"

"I thought of that—not shining shoes—but some line or other, but seems like lately that I've sort of lost my confidence in my business ability. I might lose a lot of money—"

"Money! Pah, what's money? You've got a barrel of it and what good is it doing you? . . . Very well, then that suggestion is cold; I thought it would be. Then as a last resort go out and find yourself a chum—find somebody that you can gad about with and quarrel with and fall out with and make it up again. Hear me!"

"You sit there and say that but you don't know what the situation is here in this town. I never noticed it before somehow but I've noticed it this past year. Where would I find a sociable, sensible, friendly man anywheres near my own age to run around with? They're busy all day, and evenings they want to be with their families. I've tried, I tell you; I've

looked everywhere. If you say so I'll keep on trying but—"

"Oh, get on out of here! There's somebody waiting in my outside office that I may possibly be able to help."

For all his surface gruffness Doctor Baskette heaved a perplexed and regretful sigh after his abashed visitor had withdrawn.

To Mr. Youtsey's credit, he did continue to try. Perhaps he didn't put his heart in it.

Presently he ceased trying. He took to sitting in the dingy bug-smelling lobby of the Palace Hotel, prolonging through the dragging, long, dreary morning the reading of his Chicago paper, then with a pathetic eagerness engaging and holding in conversation whatsoever would harken to him—any idling lobby-rat would do.

He took to frequenting a movie house in the afternoons, half dozing through the pictures as one of an audience of women and children and slack-jawed youths.

He took to walking up one side of Commercial Avenue and down the other, studying with a forced intentness the contents of show-windows, fingering sidewalk displays, frequently going into a store and making a lengthy and involved process of buying this or that trifling article—a kitchen utensil or a child's game or what have you? When Mr. Youtsey was a customer the transaction ate up the minutes; clerks fairly would run from the sight of him.

He took to stocking his living-room with books, mainly massive subscription sets sold to him by agents among whom the word got around, along some mysterious trade channel, that here was a king sucker of the suckers ready and anxious to sign on the dotted line for any mess of junk. He cluttered the place with these purchases, their pages uncut, their contents untasted.

He took, at five o'clock in the evening, to visiting the vicinity of the Youtsey Manufacturing Company Incorporated's plant and standing on the opposite pavement to watch the operatives filing out and the windows going blank. One evening, arriving earlier than usual, he crossed over and walked in at the door of the main office, muttering to himself, and tried to take charge. He resisted strenuously when the office force resented his intrusion.

They got him quieted down finally and got him home and wired to a Wall Street address for Titus D., Junior. That dilettante bond broker came on at once, but Estrella could not come, she being in Paris on her bridal tour and naturally unwilling to break it off.

Out twelve miles from Hobbsville, on the Cloverdale pike, they have a fine modern sanatorium for the specialized treatment, as the printed literature of the owner so discreetly and delicately phrases it, of nervous and mental disorders. The prize inmate here is a man formerly reputed to be worth three millions, the estate being still considerable though shrunken somewhat these last few years because his heirs, who also are jointly his trustees, have been—well, put it that way—rather unlucky in their investments and rather careless in their spendings. The daughter, for instance, has a French husband who must cost her a tidy sum annually for upkeep.

You've guessed, of course, who this inmate is—it's Mr. Youtsey Senior. He makes an admirable patient; he's never violent, but always docile and good-natured. His hallucination—you hardly could call it a mania—is that he must work steadily. But as the resident specialist and the attendants point out, it actually isn't work he does; it's a sort of play, and he's very happy at it.

With his own hands, which are quite deft, he makes little toy pillows, toy mattresses, toy hammock cushions, little toy ambulance pads. They are very well done, finished articles, really. The resident physician's small daughter has a dozen different sets for her doll's house and plenty more to give away. Visitors also like to have them as souvenirs of a pleasant visit to a beautiful private madhouse.



JEWELLED MOMENTS

The hour that lingers a lifetime

THE WORLD IS SO FULL OF
GIFTS THAT DIE IN A DAY

But you seek to bestow a token of enduring charm. A remembrance as lasting as the love that prompts its purchase.

Turn your thoughts toward
the JEWELRY STORE

A gift selected in this
entrancing treasure house

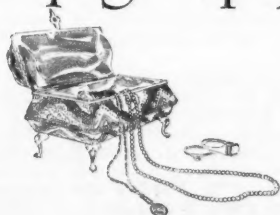
holds a heaping measure of HAPPINESS for all of the days to come.

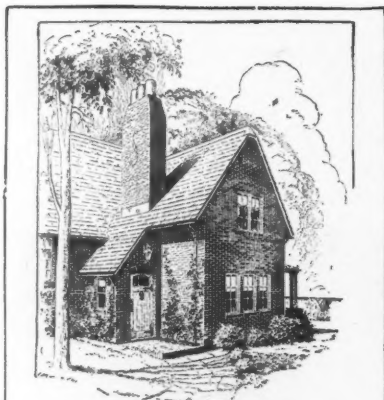
The lure of precious jewels lingers a lifetime. The hand of Time leaves but a caressing memory mark upon them. Like love itself, these jeweled gifts take on a new value, and a new charm, with the slow, continuous procession of the years.

for

GIFTS THAT LAST

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BEAUTY, permanence and real economy combine to make the Face Brick house a sound investment and a satisfying home. These and other advantages of the Face Brick house are fully discussed in "The Story of Brick"—an attractive booklet with beautiful illustrations of modern homes and chapters on such matters as Comparative Costs, Basic Requirements in Building, The Extravagance of Cheapness and kindred subjects. Sent free.

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American Face Brick Assn.
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Scientific Facts About Diet

A CONDENSED book on diet entitled "Eating for Health and Efficiency" has been published for free distribution by the Health Extension Bureau of Battle Creek, Mich. Contains set of health rules, many of which may be easily followed right at home or while traveling. You will find in this book a wealth of information about food elements and their relation to physical welfare.

This book is for those who wish to keep physically fit and maintain normal weight. Not intended as a guide for chronic invalids as all such cases require the care of a competent physician. Name and address on card will bring it without cost or obligation.

HEALTH EXTENSION BUREAU
SUITE W 228 GOOD HEALTH BLDG.
BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN

The Slave of 7 Women (Continued from page 75)

mine, though between the amounts we were respectively seeking there was the same wide gap that separated my humble person as a foreign colonizer from his opulence as a great proprietor of the country. He was interested simply in taking out a mortgage on a property he had inherited—an important operation, involving several hundred thousand dollars.

The fact that he was asking for money did not diminish my awe of this powerful man. In new countries like Argentina, a man's prestige is commensurate, more or less, with the amount of credit to which his debts testify. I suppose he was launching some enterprise that required large sums of ready money.

As we sat there, the doctor enumerated to me all the splendors of the estate he was offering the bank in security. "You know, sir," the doctor concluded with pride, "I sold seventy thousand steers from there last year! . . . And what are you thinking of doing with the money you are asking for?" the doctor finally asked me.

Modestly I laid my p'ans before him. I would import tractors and farm machinery from the United States, build an irrigation system, pay my interest out of the produce, finally parceling out my land to new buyers to recover the principal. But I was ashamed to stress such insignificant operations to a capitalist of this importance.

"I can imagine what your properties will be like after you have spent your loan on them," I concluded.

The doctor acknowledged the compliment with thoughtful gravity. Then he explained: "No—times are getting hard. It is not so easy to make anything in land speculations at present. We are getting to the point where everything is being taken up, and money must be made by actual development of the soil. We have got to modernize our agricultural methods, and extend them."

I need not say that Doctor Pedraza's negotiations were over long before mine. I soon lost sight of him. But I had gained something by being seen so frequently in his company. In a few weeks all my applications were granted, and a handsome capital was supplied me for the development of my properties. I paid my old debts, made contracts for the work I had in mind, gave my orders for machinery in the United States. But, since three or four months would elapse before actual operations began, I had a period of free time on my hands, and I thought I would spend this vacation in Europe.

Just at this time the port of Buenos Aires was all agog over the maiden trip of the *Capo Bojador*—a great liner which an Italian company had built for the South American route. It was the most magnificent steamer that had ever ascended the Rio de la Plata. Newspapers were full of descriptions of its magnificent saloons, its swimming pool, the miraculously ingenious comforts installed in its cabins, a marvelous tropical garden on its promenade-deck. The result of all this publicity was that to have a reservation for the return trip of the *Capo Bojador* was equivalent to a certificate of social distinction in Buenos Aires. Only full-fledged millionaires could indulge in such a luxury.

Certainly I had never dreamed of securing a cabin on the steamer. But, as chance would have it, while I was looking for quarters on a more modest boat, a berth on the *Capo Bojador* was given up unexpectedly and placed at my disposal at the very last moment, at a very reasonable price.

The sailing was a noisy and triumphal event. There were bands on the dock, a veritable forest of flags, and the Italian colony as a whole had turned out in honor of the occasion. I stood unnoticed in the throng. Nobody knew me, and I knew nobody. But the ship was hardly out in the river before I met acquaintances in the great floating city—Doctor Pedraza and his whole family.

Doña Zoila and her six daughters were dressed in the height of fashion, in costumes doubtless ordered by cable from Paris to serve for the journey. As for Doctor Pedraza's clothes, had I not known him, I would have mistaken him for the British Prime Minister, or for some peer of the House of Lords.

During the trip the distinguished gentleman deigned to address me many times with amiable and well-turned phrases, even showing his courtesy to the extent of introducing me to his wife and daughters.

Doña Zoila and her husband had a suite of rooms comprising a large, airy bedroom, a parlor, a library and baths. The six girls had contented themselves with three large bedrooms on the top deck, each with two beds. The party was completed by two Spanish maids to wait on the girls, a poor relation of Doña Zoila who acted as chaperon for the young ladies when their mother was absent, a personal valet to Doctor Pedraza, and an old half-breed Indian nurse who had been with Señora Pedraza since the latter's babyhood and accompanied the family everywhere. These thirteen people filled one whole section of the most expensive staterooms on the boat.

It was quite by accident that I encountered the doctor in the Place de l'Opéra some days after our arrival in France. On seeing me, he came up to me affably and tapped me on the shoulder:

"You here, Sarrano? A pleasant surprise, indeed. Looking around Europe a bit, I suppose. That's right. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Besides—what's money good for if you don't spend it?"

"What a kindly, good-natured chap!" I thought. But then I suddenly remembered where I had seen him last in Buenos Aires waiting in line in the antechambers of the National Loan and Mortgage Corporation. An absurd suspicion passed through my mind. Could he have been borrowing that money for this expensive trip to Europe?

We did not see much of each other again in Paris, for I, of course, could not live on the same plane as this millionaire. Besides, I was inclined to avoid him, not because of any dislike for him, but out of shyness in the presence of the dazzling Doña Zoila and her daughters, who seemed to radiate a new splendor over the French capital. The *Figaro*, which devotes much space to South American transients in Paris, had something to say every week about "Madame de Pedraza, the celebrated Argentine beauty, and her charming daughters."

I do not know whether it was envy or admiration which was first responsible for an epithet that came to be applied to the six Pedraza girls—"the Valkyries of the Argentine." And their success could not, indeed, have been more flattering to their parents.

Pedraza's name became a password in all the stores on the rue de la Paix, the Champs Élysées and the Place Vendôme. I know that almost every time I mentioned the fact that I came from the Argentine, I would be met with the same words: "Perhaps you know Doctor Pedraza, then, one of your famous millionaires, who is here with his wife and daughters? Pretty as a picture, every one of them! And how they throw money around! This Señora Pedraza has the best pearls of any woman in Paris."

You see, I was the only one who knew that Doctor Pedraza had mortgaged the best of his properties.

Before my own return to Argentina I heard much gossip about the great success Doña Zoila and her daughters were having. The two elder girls maintained the most exemplary reserve, going from reception to reception with a dignity and a splendor equaled only by that of their austere mother. The other four girls, however, made it clear that they were open to proposals of marriage.

I need not tell you that a great change has come about in recent years in the matrimonial



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trade in Europe. Our young nobles have discovered that there are two Americas—one North and the other South. The acquisition of heiresses from the United States is now an industry in full decadence; girls from the States seem to be less and less impressed with foreign titles. But that is not the whole story, either. The fact is that women from Anglo-Saxon America have learned by sad experience abroad to keep control of their own money, and the titled husband of an American millionairess is now beginning to find himself playing the rôle of a king-consort, without the right to touch the inheritance of his wife, and without voice or vote in the government of his household. It is in South America that inexperienced millions may still be found.

Doctor Pedraza, with his four marriageable daughters, could not have come at a more opportune moment; and all the young nobles of Paris, who looked to matrimony as a life-saver, forgot what English they knew to learn Spanish and perfect themselves in the tango.

Two of the young ladies soon came to the forefront in a sort of aristocratic rivalry. "I can be a duchess, if I wish," said one of them, "while only a marquis has asked for you!"

"But my marquis is much younger than your duke," the other replied.

I had to leave Paris just about that time. All I know of what later happened comes from what various friends told me. European fortune-hunters always show complete disinterestedness when the moment for considering actual terms arrives. In order not to interrupt their love duets with sordid discussions of finance, the duke and the marquis in question sent their lawyers to prepare the contract with the doctor and his wife.

Doctor Pedraza, as a business man, did not attach much importance to these preliminary negotiations. He thought he would be able to dictate his own terms to the two noble gentlemen who deigned to become members of his family. But he found himself confronted, not by them, but by two mellifluous French attorneys, who lacked only feathers to be perfect birds of prey. Pedraza and his wife talked like generous princes, unable to measure the extent of their fortunes. They suggested an annual income of 300,000 francs for each of the two girls.

But the lawyers pointed out that the promise of an income was not quite sufficient. The money might be paid one year, and then be diminished, and finally suppressed. Would it not be more tactful to present clear titles to actual property, something that might be converted into money at any time, and be a positive guarantee of wealth to those who owned it? These conferences, in short, ended as do all negotiations where bad faith is hidden under diplomatic urbanities. The duke and the marquis disappeared.

The two girls were much disappointed, it is said. What a misfortune! They could not show so much as a coronet to move other Argentine girls to envy.

The two elder daughters, who had endured the ambitions of the other girls in silence, thought the time had come for asserting themselves. "An Argentine girl should marry a boy from her own country. These European nobles want us only because of our money."

Again a long time passed without my seeing the doctor. I read in the papers of his family's return from Europe. Doña Zoila had thrown herself heart and soul into charity, heading all kinds of committees for poor relief and organizations for this and that moral reform. If her opinion on matters of good taste had formerly been listened to with respect, her trip to Paris had now made her the oracle of fashion.

Things were not going so well with the doctor himself, however. From time to time disquieting rumors touching the doctor's affairs penetrated even to those humble quarters in the financial world where modest business men like myself held forth. His intimate friends boasted that he had spent fully a million dollars in Europe; and that, as I knew,

was much more than he had borrowed from the Loan and Mortgage bank. A pearl necklace which Doña Zoila brought back with her impressed people generally as something far beyond the means even of a man as wealthy as Doctor Pedraza was reputed to be.

Just at this time Argentina was passing through one of those financial crises which are a sort of periodical affliction of the countries of the New World. After some years of extraordinary prosperity, a reaction had set in. Ready money was getting scarce; banks were withdrawing credits; and the markets showed wide-spread financial atony.

Doctor Pedraza's situation was like that of many of his countrymen. To all appearances he was a very rich man who was continuing to busy himself with various enterprises of importance. News of his misfortune came to me intermittently and in fragments.

I was told, for instance, that he had reserved a box at the Colon as usual, for his family; but in payment for it, he had offered the director of the opera not a check, but a note payable in ninety days.

Later I heard that he had taken out a large mortgage on the other ranch of his, the one belonging to his wife. Next I learned that the sales of cattle and crops from the doctor's two estates had barely paid the interest on their respective mortgages.

His two elder daughters had married, with a splendor and éclat that set all Buenos Aires talking admiringly. There was an historic magnificence to their weddings. But people were quite frank in saying that poor Doctor Pedraza was having a time of it to maintain appearances, on the one hand, and to pay the huge interest on his debts, on the other.

I cannot describe in detail the progress of his ruin, which was a long and gradual one. When the banks refused to lend him more money, he began borrowing at usury. After that, he took to frenzied speculation. This much I know for a fact, that he kept all the circumstances of his ruin hidden from his family. He would not allow his wife to modify her manner of living in the slightest degree, feeling that any visible economy would compromise his credit. He dressed as carefully as usual, and still maintained his impressive, lordly bearing. But he was aging rapidly.

As often happens with people who live in constant danger and insecurity, feeling the earth shaking and about to yawn beneath their feet, Doctor Pedraza came to have a superstitious reliance on the mysterious forces that may intervene to protect mortals and save them by the secret preferences of sheer good fortune. After gambling on the Exchange and losing heavily, he turned to cards at the various aristocratic clubs of which he was a member—and lost still more. But the curious thing was that he ordered the clerks in his office to admit anyone who asked to see him. Who could tell? Perhaps the most humble visitor might bring him the suggestion that would save him.

And so it was, one day, that a life insurance agent of the most ordinary kind obtained an interview with the doctor, and went away with a policy for \$200,000 in favor of Doña Zoila and her six daughters. This policy called for a large payment down and a heavy premium year by year, though the premiums would diminish as time went by. Never before had this agent written a policy so magnificent; and he must have boasted of his triumph to his various colleagues. For, in the next few days, Doctor Pedraza was literally besieged with life insurance agents.

At first he refused to take out any more policies, but then suddenly he began to show an extraordinary interest in them. A man of impeccable physique, free from all trace of disease, he had no difficulty with any of the companies. In a few weeks Doctor Pedraza was insured in more than a dozen firms, some of them the largest and most powerful of Europe and the United States. His life had come to be worth more than two million dollars, as he remarked laughingly to some of his friends. But they, considering the state of his health,

observed that with the high premiums he had to pay, he would spend more than that amount by the time he began to think of dying.

"We are not so sure it is a very good piece of business," said they. "You are going to live for a very long time."

"Even so," he would reply. "What does it matter? This is money that I am placing on deposit for my heirs."

And then came death—a death which fell like a thunderbolt upon his friends, who called it stupid and absurd—as though death could ever be anything else!

It was summer-time and the doctor's family was at the Pedraza Villa on the Tiger Islands, where Doña Zoila had erected a splendid mansion. (I need not say that this estate also was heavily mortgaged.)

The doctor went out to the islands every evening, attending dances at the casino with his daughters, and took the morning train back to business in town. It was on one of these short journeys that the doctor lost his life. No one saw the accident, and it has never been determined exactly how he died. Apparently he had fallen off a platform in passing from one car to another. All that is known for certain is that his corpse was found on the track, ground to pieces under the wheels of his train.

The newspapers devoted much space to the occurrence, blaming the railroad company for not equipping its suburban trains with enclosed vestibules. It was also pointed out that the road-bed was very rough in the immediate neighborhood of the accident, that the car platforms were not in the best condition, and that the hinges on the gates often opened by themselves. It was quite possible that a man like Doctor Pedraza, his mind obsessed with his work, should have fallen a victim to one of these negligences of the company. But that was the end of the matter.

Doña Zoila gave her husband a magnificent funeral, and editorials spoke of his death as a loss to the country at large.

But no one thought of mentioning the thing that occurred to me. I regarded him as a hero outright, and I think a few of our friends viewed his death in the same light. For whenever his name came up, we would look at each other fixedly and fall silent, as though a common thought, which none of us dared express, was in all our minds. Why, in fact, disturb a national mourning with unfair suspicions?

The doctor's death had sufficed to show how many friends he had, and what a real leadership Doña Zoila enjoyed in Argentine society. She and her daughters collected over two million dollars from the life insurance companies, and everyone commented on the foresight of the prudent husband and father that Doctor Pedraza had shown himself to be. The settlement of his estate revealed, to the general surprise of the nation, that he was really a poor man, almost all his possessions having been swallowed up in losses incident to the panic.

The two millions from his life insurance came just in time to redeem everything. Doña Zoila paid off all the mortgages on her properties. The financial crisis passed. The next season, prices on wheat and cattle rose to normal. The two ranches of the Pedrazas began to return magnificent incomes.

That is why the widow Pedraza continues in her leadership of Buenos Aires society, attracting the attention of everyone for her usual elegance—but the elegance now of a lady who has ceased outshining her friends and is content with somber colors and modest, though perfect, gems. No concert, no charitable fiesta is a success unless her name figures among the patronesses. Actors, musicians, lecturers from abroad understand that they will fail unless they can count on her support.

All her daughters are now married, and grandchildren are beginning to pull at her silken skirts. Whenever she feels a sudden tenderness for one of her sons-in-law, she says:

"My boy, I like you just as you are. But I do hope you will be as thoughtful of your family as my husband, the late Doctor Pedraza, was."

A Free Soul by Adela Rogers St. Johns (Continued from page 53)

course. Always, before the end, he had quieted it. Now he was appalled, amazed, secretly, to find the strength of this monster.

But like other tides, it ebbed and he somehow righted himself, exhausted as a swimmer who has begun a fight for life against the sea when already at the limit of his endurance.

Still, he could bear it in the daytime. The great, vivid, beautiful world around him alight with sunshine seemed some sort of reassurance. The voice of running water, which he had ever loved, murmuring in beds of silver sand and lichen-covered rocks, or the heavenly roar of waterfalls descending the mountainsides, the songs of the birds and the whispered stories the trees told each other, all spoke to him of the possibility of a Creator Who understood beauty, and this restored his faith a little.

Also, there was Jan. From Jan in those days he had a companionship of the first water and it bridged over the chasms that yawned at his feet.

Small wonder. For never did mortal woman make greater efforts than did Jan Ashe. She knew something of the vast store of his learning. In the old days she had often marveled with the reporters as he cross-examined a jeweler or a chemist, an alienist or a coal-merchant, in his own language and upon the most technical points.

Now she sharpened her wits, she urged her own mind to draw him out; to interest him in this and that, to keep him happy, to keep him from brooding. She felt his moods, little sharp gusts against her spirit, which sometimes rebelled beneath all this responsibility.

When she could make him laugh—and she did, often—her eyes would glow like the little lakes that they sometimes came upon at sunset. When she had drawn him to speech she became such an audience as many a man dreams of all his life and never finds. There was inspiration in the way she listened, that girl.

He wondered often if she thought of Ace Wilfong, and once he asked her. But she only gave him a startled look, her eyes shining strangely, and for the rest of the afternoon she chattered ceaselessly, which was not her way, for she was a silent little thing unless she had a purpose for speech. She did not talk just to be talking.

So you see, he could weather the days, and in spite of himself the hollows filled a little, and the worn white of his face was covered by the kindly sun with a coat of brown that gave him an appearance of health and youth to the eye. But the nights. They were a different matter.

In spite of what Jan had said, often enough they camped out, for the summer was glorious. They had acquired a pack-horse that bore their light supplies, and Stephen Ashe understood such matters as fires and shelters.

The great camp-fire would light up the boles of the trees, and the rustling, scented night woods would close in around them, and they would sit together and talk until it grew very late.

Jan understood that her father hated to go to bed. But at last he would say gaily, "Well, Mick, it's time to turn in," and they would go off together to their beds of pine-needles and curl up in their light sleeping-bags, for the summer dawns were chill and misty.

Then began for Stephen Ashe long hours when he lay tense, hag-ridden, staring at the cathedral dome above him where the stars burned like candles.

He could not sleep. That was the very worst of it. And he would lie motionless until his nerves burned like red-hot needles.

Sometimes he managed to lie motionless until Jan dropped into a deep, childlike slumber. Then he would be free to begin the endless, fruitless search for that cool, restful spot where his aching skin might find peace.

His mind worked with startling clearness in the darkness. It flung upon the sands of his

wakefulness a thousand long-buried, long-drowned visions, companions, happenings of the past. He was amazed to find the things his mind had held on to. And he knew that he had always dragged about with him some sense of remorse, a conviction of wrong-doing. If he could only have gone ahead sinning in the care-free, reckless way of most men! But he had never entirely cast off his scruples, hard as he tried.

And now within himself was only a trackless waste, arid and scornful as the desert itself.

The thing was that he was tired, tired. He didn't want to fight. Why should he? There was no harm in a man's getting drunk occasionally if he wanted to. He could handle the stuff. This was puerile. He'd done a dozen men's work in his short lifetime. He'd saved men from the gallows, from the prison bars. There wasn't anything very wrong in the things he did.

And then he would see the white blur of Jan's face in the darkness, pillowed on her arm.

They had made a bet. He must save her. He could not lose this fight. And as the light came back, he would lie quite still in something that was very like a faint.

Nor did he know whether his insomnia was born of his desire, or his desire of his insomnia.

There were other nights when the tossing and pitching began before Jan had gone to sleep. And then she would get up and come over and rub his head and the cords of his neck with her strong, kind fingers, and sometimes she would hold him in her arms as a mother holds her baby and croon to him very softly.

Then one night Jan woke to find him gone.

What woke her, she never knew. But she was sitting up, every sense alert, breath suspended. Instantly she looked at her father's place. It was empty. She sprang up, dragging on her boots. The horses were there. Standing on the trail, looking up and down, she swore at some length, which was her way of stilling the panic in her heart.

She found him. He was barefooted and coatless. And as he stood on the trail he shook like an aspen.

She said, "What's the idea, anyway? If you wanted to go for a walk, why didn't you say so?"

But he looked at her in bitter antagonism. His mouth was harsh, cruel in the half-light that the moon gave. And when she dropped her hand on his shoulder it stiffened with resistance.

"Come on back, dad," she said, "and get your shoes on. No well-dressed man goes around without his shoes, as I've told you often enough before."

"I won't come back," said Stephen Ashe. "Jan, don't ask me. I've got to sleep. I tell you I've got to sleep. You don't know. I haven't slept for nights and nights. It's too awful. No man is expected to stand it. The days are getting just as bad. I want to sleep so and I can't. I'm going crazy. I don't want a drink. I don't care anything about a drink. But I've got to go somewhere where I can sleep."

"What's all the shooting about?" said Jan, with a crooked grin. "Come on back and behave and we'll get the horses and go anywhere you like. It'll take you longer if you try to walk, you poor nut."

He stared at her with concentrated dislike and suspicion. "I don't believe you," he said. "You'll get me back there and I don't know what you'll do. You might tie me up. You know, Jan, you're a little crazy on one subject. You're a fine little girl in most ways, but you've got a fixed delusion about booze. I don't want a drink. But you think I do."

"Probably you're right," said Jan. "Anyway, if I were you, I wouldn't go without my horse. It's silly. I wouldn't let any crazy woman do me out of my horse."

At last he went with her, but he walked two steps behind and never took his eyes from her boyish, striding figure.

The next day they started down into the valley. At the first small town, Jan stopped and wired for the one doctor in San Francisco that she would trust, for a nurse, for a masseur, for a car, and for Mac. The snail-pace of the combination station master, ticket agent and telegraph operator was not increased by the sudden appearance at his window of this dazzling and scornful lady, whose gray eyes under scowling black brows actually bored a hole through him, and before he had deciphered the sheaf of scrawled messages, Jan discovered that her father had disappeared from the little platform.

As abruptly as she had come, the vision vanished.

But she found him sauntering along the main and only street, his hands in his pockets, and her quick, direct look could detect nothing amiss.

Upon their ride, Jan had noted a small inn, converted from a farmhouse, and clinging to a mountainside just above one of the large towns of the Sacramento Valley. She had kept it in her mind for this possible emergency. To it she had summoned her reinforcements.

In the station, her dad disappeared casually once more, this time into the one place where, now that the saloon has vanished and the barber shop is neuter, a man might reasonably consider himself safe even from the women of his own family. But Jan Ashe was not the girl to let a mere convention stand in her way at a time like that, and when the clock had ticked off five minutes, she shattered another fundamental social law and gave the station master a shock from which he never wholly recovered.

Under her swift hand the bottle of Jamaica ginger, from which Stephen Ashe had just succeeded in getting the cork, went to the floor with a crash.

Across the worn bench in the waiting-room they faced each other, the girl ablaze with white rage, the man with scarlet shame.

"That's just something for my stomach," he blustered. "I haven't the digestion of an ostrich and my own camp-fire cooking hasn't altogether agreed with me."

"You'd need the digestion of a cast-iron boiler for that stuff," said Jan, trying to speak calmly in spite of her breathlessness. "It's ninety percent alcohol. Dad, this is your end of the bet. I'm trying to help you win it. At least play fair with me—don't cheat."

And she pretended not to notice how his hands shook over the chessmen as the local train jerked and jolted along, and she had great difficulty in letting him win without his knowing that she was letting him, for he played execrably, but she thought it might do him good to win.

To the doctor, a dried-up little man with piercing, beady black eyes that looked as though they had gazed upon everything between and including the birth and death of man, which they had, she said, "What can you do, Doctor Jim?"

He beat his beaked nose back and forth with a forefinger, a habit he had when meditating deeply. "Do? Do?" he said crossly. "I can't do anything. This isn't my business, this kind of thing. Get a priest, get some kind of a sky-pilot, get a D.D., not an M.D., for this sort of work. If you got me up here expecting I could cure egomania and a sick will, you're crazy." "My dad is not an egomaniac." Never in her whole life had Jan Ashe been quite so angry, but the little doctor only blinked at her imperturbably.

"No? When's he ever thought of anything besides himself in the last twenty years? When's he ever done anything for anybody but himself since you can remember? When did he ever stop doing anything that he wanted to do, eh?"

Jan was gray-white beneath the impact of

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the indictment. But her voice came clear as a bell. "Why, you wicked, wicked man! He's saved thousands of people from prison. He's worked for people for nothing—he's taken as many cases for charity as he has for pay. He's been the most generous man in San Francisco—everybody says so."

"Generous? Generous? Generous with his money because he doesn't care anything about it and hasn't got any sense of responsibility. Generous with money he ought to pay his own bills with. And as for the people he's saved from jail, most of 'em ought to have been hanged, and you know it as well as I do. People always go around saying what a wonderful man Stephen Ashe is. What's so wonderful about him? God gave him a great brain—greatest brain I ever came in contact with in my experience. What'd he do with it? Got it all twisted out of shape, all warped, defending a lot of criminals that the world would be better off without. And why? Because he liked it, that's why."

"He's been the most kind, the most generous, the most wonderful father any girl ever had," said Jan Ashe. "And you'd better go right back to San Francisco on the next train. I wouldn't let you in the same room with him."

The beady black eyes hardened ferociously, and then quite suddenly they softened again. "God bless the faith of women," he said. "But for them we'd have seen no resurrection, I expect. Well, what'd you expect me to do? I'm only an old tinkerer with the body. Don't get on your ear. I'll do anything I can."

"Doctor Jim," said Jan, very quietly, "I don't expect anything. Only if you can do anything to help him, do it. I have the feeling that the longer we get him away from it, and the stronger he is bodily, and the more clearly he sees, the better chance he'll have."

"You're right there," said the doctor, nodding like a bird. "We'll clean the carbon out of the engine. Then we'll see whether it's cut the steel. That's all we can do. Only way to tell that is to see if he can make the grade. That's the only test of an engine—can it make a grade? Most any bum car can run on the level. And remember this—the only lesson we can learn from history is that nobody ever learned a lesson from it yet."

In two days Jan and the doctor had turned the funny little inn into a private hospital for Steve Ashe and hang the expense. What was money, mere money to Jan that it should stand between her father and the smallest chance of his salvation?

So they took up the fight. Massage for those throbbing nerves, hot baths and improvised steamings, diet and bromides and exercise, and at last Stephen Ashe slept—at first one solid hour in the night, and then two, and finally five.

On that morning the nurse found Jan weeping outside his door and said sharply, it being somehow the habit of nurses to speak sharply when their sympathies are aroused, "I'll be having you for a patient next if you don't take care of yourself, young lady."

But Jan turned a radiant, impudent face upon her. "You darned old grouch!" said Jan affectionately. "Can't you let a gal yelp a little when she's happy?"

That afternoon, while she lay sprawled among the oak-trees by the little stream, a book of Keats open in her lap, Mac came ponderously down to her. Jan, having heard him approach for many feet, pretended to be absorbed in her book. Mac's efforts at secrecy always filled her with secret delight.

"Once a gumshoe, always a gumshoe," she said at last, in her sweetest voice. "What'd you want now, Sherlock? Have you been robbing the mint?"

Mac sat down on the bank and lighted a cigaret, and Jan, watching him with great amusement, rolled herself one. They smoked in amiable silence, as two people who understand each other without the need of many words.

"Old man looks pretty good this morning," said Mac.

Jan nodded. She had admitted Mac to the privilege of the fight, but she could not bring herself to discuss it with him.

He turned and surveyed her with a direct and impersonal glance. "You're looking better yourself," he said, noting the rich, warm cream of her skin and the brightness of her hair, that was startling in this dim grove. "You looked sort of peaked when I come up."

Jan grinned. "Am I going to need such an awful lot of health for this news you've got to break to me?" she asked.

From his pocket, Mac took a letter.

Jan had never seen Ace Wilfong's handwriting, but suddenly her pulses gave a terrified leap that was like getting a shock from an electric wire.

"I got a letter here," said Mac.

"So I see," said Jan, after the manner of women when they have shut their eyes and put one hand over them to keep out even the smallest glimpse.

"I was told," said Mac, "to give it to you if you wanted it, and if you were feeling real good and it'd make you happy. There's nothing important in it. It's just a—just a letter."

The little white hand reached out for it. The shining gray eyes opened and looked down upon it.

Mac desired greatly to tell her of the man who had given him that letter. But his vocabulary was limited. He had got the letter in this fashion.

Not long after the Ashes had departed into the unknown, Mac had received a message from Ace Wilfong. It appeared that Ace desired to see him, Mac, about a little matter of business concerning his book at Tia Juana.

So that night Mac went up to Ace's big place on the top floor of a certain office-building. He sat in the little office behind the wooden partition and studied the bad checks pinned on the wall while one of the boys went for Ace. He had always liked Ace Wilfong, but when he came in, he felt somehow that he liked him much better than he had remembered. Probably women would have called him handsome, women being partial to dark, rough, curly hair and big black eyes, but Mac didn't think so much about that. Only it suddenly occurred to him that, gambler or no gambler, this Ace Wilfong was very much a man. The set of his jaw, the expression of his mouth, the straight gaze of his eye were good things to see.

They talked about the book at Tia Juana. Ace had employed a man to figure odds whom Mac knew and he wished Mac's opinion. He got it. And he said that he would fire the man forthwith. Nobody could work for Ace Wilfong who wasn't honest. He had fired a dealer that very night for being crooked.

Then, gazing straight at the bare, unpainted wall, Ace Wilfong said, "What do you hear from Mr. Ashe?"

Now Mac, you will understand, knew nothing, naturally, of the bargain between Jan Ashe and her father. But he did know of the many nights when Jan Ashe and this man had danced together, of the many days when they had lunched and ridden together. It was not his habit to discuss the Ashes, father or daughter, but he had an odd, instinctive feeling that this man had a right to ask.

Cautiously he said, "Well—he's getting along pretty good, I guess. I haven't heard much."

"I'd appreciate it, Mac," said Ace Wilfong, turning to look him directly in the eyes, "if you'd let me know once in a while how things are getting along. I reckon maybe you know I wouldn't ask you if there was anything wrong in it."

"I do," said Mac.

"Sometimes folks think they are considerably stronger than they really are," said Ace quietly, "and they might not ask for help if they needed it. I'd just like to—hear once in a while. It'd be a great help to me."

So Mac formed the habit of dropping up to Ace's place whenever a stray postal card or a



LEONA HOGARTH, recently starring in New York in "The Great God Brown" and now playing opposite Frank Keenan in "Black Velvet" says she much prefers Gage hats. They are always just a little ahead of the times and give one the assurance of being correctly dressed for all occasions. A colorful turban of metallic brocade smartly complements her formal furs.



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scrawled epistle arrived. He did not let Ace read them. That would not have been quite according to Hoyle. But he memorized them and repeated them word for word, quite matter-of-factly. Of course, they were very matter-of-fact, anyway, those postals and hasty messages. But from the look on Ace Wilfong's face you might have thought they were the immortal words of some new Mrs. Browning.

And when the telegram came summoning him, Mac went up again and said: "Well, I'm going away tomorrow and I thought I'd say good-by. I'm going to join the old man—me and a doctor and a nurse and some other folks. Maybe you'd like me to write you once in a while."

Ace Wilfong did not answer for a long time. Then he said, "I wonder if you'd mind carrying a little message for me."

Mac said he wouldn't mind. He wasn't taking much baggage and it'd be no extra trouble at all.

So Ace Wilfong wrote. Only three or four lines. And when he gave them to Mac, he said, in that low, fine voice of his: "Tell her not to read it if she doesn't want to. There's nothing important in it. I just wanted her to know she had a friend that would be glad to help her if she should need anything."

None of this did Mac tell Jan Ashe as they sat together under the oaks.

And after she had held it in her hand for many minutes, Jan slowly tore it across, tore it across again, unopened, and reaching over, laid the pieces upon the swiftly moving bosom of the stream.

Jan watched them sail out of sight and her eyes were mysterious, they were deep and shining and mysterious, they were sad and they were happy, and though a smile touched them, surely there were tears upon the thick black lashes.

"Well, I guess you know what you're doing," said Mac. He had said that about Jan Ashe since she was eight.

Jan spoke because it seemed that she must speak. She had been silent so long. "What is the use of reading it?" she said. "That's a woman's game. I can't play at being friends with the man I love. What's the use of torturing myself? If you've got to cut a thing off, cut it clean. It may hurt—it does hurt—but it's better than the other."

She stood up, stretching her arms high above her head, and in the white linen riding-habit she was wearing Mac thought she looked exactly like some handsome and boyish polo-player, going into an international cup match and steeling for the grueling hours of life-and-death play.

Now no sooner had the Ashes returned to town, no sooner were they seen about than people began to talk a great deal about them, and particularly about Steve Ashe's comeback. That they discussed pro and con, some saying that it would last because Stephen Ashe was a wonderful man, and others saying that it would not because it never did.

They had come back to town when Stephen Ashe grew suddenly restless. A man, he said, must work. He needed something to keep his mind occupied. He wanted to get back to his profession. Besides, a man cannot hide from life forever. He must face his enemy in the open, for if he is afraid and runs, his enemy will sometime catch up with him, and then he is lost indeed.

And back once more in the city, back among people, a great wave of restlessness and of fear swept Jan Ashe. That was the curse of the Ashes. They could capture any heights. But they could not hold them under fire.

"I am like the man in Oscar Wilde's play," Jan said to Dick Furniss, who came to dine with them now and again. "I can resist everything except temptation."

But that was only because she was bitter at losing the serenity of the mountains, the peace of the open road. And she fought down her bitterness with a great gratitude for the victory they had won, and she fought a

poignant loneliness that came to life at old scenes, old scents, old reminders.

"Come up often," she said to Dick Furniss, "and bring the old gang, if they'll come. Above everything, we mustn't let him feel he's an outsider. It's tough enough in the face of the whole world, having to fight back. I want to make him feel as natural as I can—as much like nothing had changed."

Dick came. Others came, sometimes. But it is hard to pick up broken threads and everyone was busy and Stephen Ashe would not be very important to them until he had made himself important again.

Of that, Jan had every hope. Until one night something as cold and definite as a bullet in the pit of her stomach awakened her from sleep. Every nerve quivering with such fear as she had never known, Jan crossed the big drawing-room and went into her father's bedroom.

Stephen Ashe lay across his bed as though he had been struck by lightning.

Jan looked down upon the wreck of all her hopes. If Ace Wilfong could have seen the little gray face then, he would probably have desired to kill Stephen Ashe in cold blood.

Wearily, Jan Ashe knelt and began with leaden hands to unlace her father's shoes.

"I don't understand how you could do it, daddy," she said, the next morning, and it was plain that her self-control was broken to bits. "I can't understand. I can't. After all you've been through. And you were quite yourself. Everything was ahead of you. I can understand that you can't stop after you've taken the first drink. But I can't understand how when you're sober you can take the first one. What were you thinking about?"

He shook his head. He had no clear recollection of the thing. He had suddenly become arrogant. He could drink. He could take one or two and let it alone. Why should he, Stephen Ashe, be put under petty rules of conduct? He had beaten it and he would prove that he could drink like a gentleman. The smell of it was in his nostrils. Desire, but not very strong desire, had awakened. It wasn't the body. The brain had played him false, with a delusion of his security, a conceit as to his strength, a refusal longer to bear what he considered the humiliation of his manhood.

He did not ask her for another chance, but she gave it to him automatically—one more. That was because her mind could not so swiftly adjust itself to the new situation. She could not surrender hope. The old pity tore her heart in two. The mother in her continued to believe just a little longer in a miracle that might happen. It is a mother who believes in miracles.

That night she sat outside of his door and what happened there no one but Jan Ashe will ever know. She never spoke of it. Only when he desired to go forth for whisky, she battled the demon which possessed him with all the amazing strength of her little white hands and her supple, hard little body, and won. Nor did she let him see the marks left by the beast, lest it destroy the last remnant of his manhood.

He went out at noon with Mac. There was business to attend to and at that stage of the game he could not afford to miss appointments. At four o'clock Mac came back alone. Stephen Ashe had quietly vanished in the maze of traffic.

Jan Ashe waited forty-eight hours until he came back. She sat alone with her defeat, with her despair. She looked upon life. She stared into the future with hard, defiant eyes. She would be free once more of these shackles that softened her, crippled her, bound her, these shackles of hope and faith. She panted for freedom. She would be a free soul once more, asking nothing, expecting nothing, wrestling what she could from life, seizing glittering moments, doing the things she wanted to do.

When he came in, she said calmly, "Well, dad, you've lost."

He could not speak. He swayed in his tracks, and the three days' growth of beard on his chin was white.

NIGHTLY she *Drifts*
through the
Silver pools of
The SPOTLIGHT

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more exacting wear than this girl
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WHEN the lights are lowered and the music takes on a new rhythm, she glides into the silver pools of the spotlight . . . dazzling, effortless, a creature from another world.

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is knit only the finest of specially selected silk. Into those deftly fashioned heels and toes that fit the foot so flawlessly are reinforcements insuring miles of wear—yet so exquisitely made the most sensitive foot will never feel them.

While the soft clear colors of these hose do not grow faded or streaked looking—even with repeated washings. Since all Gordon stockings are given their exquisite shades by dyes made according to the splendid old European formulas which it required generations to perfect!

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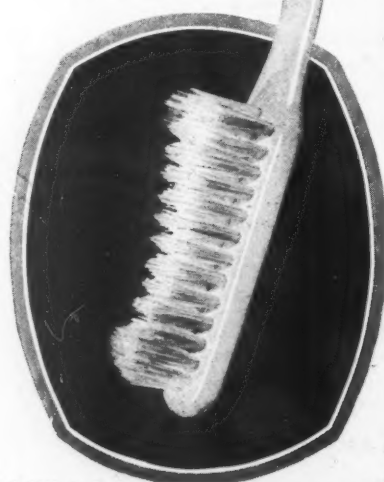
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if you are to keep
them ALL

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PRICE 50¢
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Jan Ashe went into her bedroom. She put on her hat before the mirror, with steady hands. She picked up her gloves and the shiny black bag she had packed hours before. He did not speak when she came out. Those tortured, lost eyes. But she stared at him, her eyes cold as steel.

She walked swiftly to the door and his eyes followed her. The shoddy, dark pretense he made of being Stephen Ashe, a gentleman, at ease in his own drawing-room, and all the time those bloodshot eyes stamping him fraud. The smile he summoned to say that he was indifferent about her going, that he was in fact rather glad to have her go, but that only shouted his poor terror.

At the door, she said: "I'm going to marry Ace Wilfong—of course you understand that. We made a bet and you lost. Now it's up to you to be a good sport. Go through with the thing as though you'd picked your son-in-law from the clamoring throngs yourself."

"All right," said Stephen Ashe. But his lips were gray.

"Good-by," said Jan.

But she could not do it.

Like a streak of light she crossed the room. Her arms were about him. "My daddy, my daddy, my poor old daddy!" she said.

"I couldn't make the grade, Jan," he told her slowly. "I haven't got it in me. I don't want to try any more. I'm so tired. I can't face it. I can't come back. Something's burned out. Just let me alone. I'd rather drop out and let people forget me than to hang around and have them sorry for a has-been. Poor old Steve Ashe. No—I can't make the grade."

And for the first time Jan Ashe was silent, except for the sobs that all but strangled her. What could she say?

"But I can't believe it," said Ace Wilfong. He was so white that his white shirt looked quite gray. No mask now. Enchantment, happiness had unmasked him. And his eyes were almost mad with joy; they would be quite mad when that last fear, that last doubt was swept away.

"I had almost given up hope," he said.

Jan Ashe sat in the window-seat watching him. Her eyes were grave. Her lips were thoughtful. He had never seen her so white.

"I have loved you all the time," she said gravely. She made a little gesture of invitation with her hand, and he came and sat down beside her.

He waited for her to speak, but she did not. Only stared out gravely. He felt that she was thinking of something she must say. He would let her say that, since it seemed so grave a matter, before he kissed her. For when he had once kissed her, he felt that he would no longer be sane enough to listen.

And he was suddenly conscious of the strangeness of her. He felt that he did not know her, that he loved many women in this one woman. But he was not afraid.

Suddenly, in a small, grave voice, she said, "You are taking a terrible chance in marrying me, Ace Wilfong. Do you know that?"

"I think so. I have taken chances all my life," he smiled at her very gaily.

"Most people would say," went on the voice impersonally, "that you were quite mad. And I will not deceive you, Ace. I will not lie to you. I rather expect they are right. No, wait. Let me say this. It is important. We must try to understand each other. I cannot promise you anything about myself. I love you. I love you differently than I have ever loved any man before. But I must be free. There are a great many things against us, Ace—do you realize that?"

His eyes were very dark. He said, "Do those things count with you, Jan?"

"No. I am thinking of you. For you are a very strong man, Ace—I know that now. And

you love me a great deal, don't you? I shouldn't wonder if you loved me almost as much as I love you—but not quite. Oh no, darling! For men never love as much as women. They aren't made that way. But you are strong, very strong. You have beaten things—life, other men. You rule in your world, so they tell me. You dominate people. But I am strong too, you see. If we fought, which of us would win?"

"We should never fight," said Ace Wilfong. "How could I fight with you, Jan, when I love you so?"

"But those are the only people to fight with," said Jan. "It would not be worth while fighting with people one cares nothing about."

"There is one thing—" said Ace Wilfong. "Yes?"

"It is about your father. I think of him—very highly, Jan. He was an idol to me when I was a kid. He is a great man. How will he feel now about our marriage?"

Jan did not answer. She was thinking again. These two men she loved!

"In time," she said, "he will feel quite all right about it. He likes you. He will not interfere, if that is what you mean. He will be friends, he will give us a chance to prove him wrong. But he knows me. And you understand that nothing, Ace, nothing can ever come between my father and me."

"That is one of the reasons I love you."

"He is afraid only because he knows me. He knows that all my life I have done what I wanted to do. I—shall. And if I did something that I wanted to do very much and you did not want me to—would you make a dreadful fuss, being my husband and all that?" Her eyes were amused, fearless, but very serious, too.

"You couldn't do anything I wouldn't like." A man in love! A man worshiping before a high, white altar! A man gazing upward at a star!

Jan contemplated him gravely. "Are you apt to be—jealous?" she asked absently.

On the seat, their hands touched. And the clamor that shot through them, pulse on pulse, silenced them so that Jan's question was never answered. His arm caught her to him. Time was lost in the soft violence of their kiss. Her hands clutched his shoulders, clinging, burning.

"It has been hell without you," he said, when her head dropped forward on his breast.

At that she raised her eyes and looked at him. "I love you," she said fiercely, strongly. "Don't ask any more than that. Don't think. I love you."

"If I had to go to Hell to be with you," said Ace Wilfong, in a husky whisper, "I'd go."

Ace Wilfong and Jan Ashe were married very quietly in the big, untidy drawing-room at the St. Francis that had been Jan's home for so many years. The newspapers said that only the immediate families of the bride and bridegroom were present. But not all the immediate families were on hand. Gwennie and Bill Wilfong were there. And Dick Furniss. And Mac. And Stephen Ashe played his part like the consummate actor he was. But the women of the Ashe family were, as Jan said, conspicuous by their absence.

If old Mrs. Ashe had been alive, she would probably have defied Dorothea and been present at her granddaughter's nuptials, be they ever so dangerous and déclassé. But old Deborah was to be spared the worst misfortunes of the house of Ashe. And if apoplexy had not killed her the year before, the headlines which accompanied the marriage of her granddaughter undoubtedly would have. Certainly they made exciting reading for the whole town. No story in a long time, it would appear, had been worth quite so much space as the amazing romance of Stephen Ashe's daughter and the king of the gamblers, nor had excited so much speculation as to its outcome.

Will Jan's marriage of love and impulse stand against the assaults of a conventional world, and the desire for freedom in her own soul? Fate prepares a strange test in Mrs. St. Johns' Instalment for December

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The Busy, Boiling 90's (Continued from page 77)

story of how badly they were frightened can never be told.

The first trip to Europe in 1895. James J. Hill pacing the decks of the Etruria like a caged leopard. She is such a roller that a heavy sea comes through the port-holes of the smoke-room on the top deck. Sir George Curzon presiding at the concert.

A super-thrill as John McCutcheon, Billy Kent and I ride through the streets of London to the good old Victoria Hotel in Northumberland Avenue. To the Bow Street Station with a letter of introduction from Billy Pinkerton to Scotland Yard officials and the first prisoner led into the dock is one of our shipmates, who played cards all the way across. He is an international crook and the large blonde who accompanies him and totes a dog is not really his wife. Gracious me!

Third class on all the railroads and stopping at hotels incredibly cheap and scrupulously clean and our modest tips are as welcome as the flowers that bloom in the spring, tra la. Three months in Europe—total expense from Chicago back to Chicago—\$900. It can't be done.

One month in El Paso waiting for Fitzsimmons and Maher to get together. A lonely island in the Rio Grande. Rangers and greasers looking down from the amphitheatered hills above. Maher knocked sprawling before the gloves have time to get warm.

It is 1896 in St. Louis and the silver delegates are gathering up their doll-rags and starting for home. Just behind me sits an eagle-faced correspondent from Omaha, unhonored and unnoticed. His name is Bryan. Shift to Chicago and a bedlam known as the Democratic National Convention. The Omaha correspondent is now swathed in glory and leader of an enchanted host. I didn't believe one word of that "Cross of Gold" oratorical paroxysm, but it gave me the goose-pimples just the same. Many weeks of panic and ghost-dancing. The proletariat whoops for Bryan and votes for McKinley.

A chance to voyage on the revenue cutter McCulloch from Newport News to California, via Suez. Too many days at sea and too few ports, so I decline. John McCutcheon and Ed Harden sail away to become involved in the battle of Manila Bay. Mac is away for years instead of months. George remains at home and surveys, at long range, that moonlight social function arranged by the Castilian Guitar-Players' Association and

known as the Spanish-American War. In retrospect it seems to have marked the emergence of that jovial Titan, Theodore Roosevelt, and to have proved that the most fragile creation of public delirium is the popular hero.

I file off the chain holding me to my desk and wind up 1898 by rummaging through southern and eastern Europe for nearly three months, appointing correspondents for Victor Lawson's newspapers and trying to convince them that a king heading a parade is not important news for Chicago readers. France, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Syria, Greece, Corfu—all by my loneliness and discovering that the Scotch are about the friendliest travelers to meet up with.

What is this? The publisher reports that the discriminating populace is eagerly snapping up a small yellow volume called "Fables in Slang." The news is not altogether elating, as I have promised William Dean Howells, in a never-to-be-forgotten interview, that I will further consecrate my efforts to unadorned realism. But, hang it all, the circus vernacular brings in more royalties than "Artie," "Pink Marsh" and "Doc Horne" all put together. The dollar sign is luminous in the sky. Another good man gone wrong.

What about 1899? It brought the tempter to jingle gold in my ears and tell how easy it is to defraud the public by syndicating frivolous pieces to the Sunday papers. Another book of fables. "He's not as good as he was at first." He never was.

One of the last performances before a final escape from the newspaper grind—joining up with the Ringling Circus at Union City, Tennessee, and about three weeks through the black belt as the guest of Alf Ringling. A real experience and a chance to hobnob with the big-top gypsies.

My friends urge me not to desert the newspaper profession—and leave it stranded. "Don't give up a sure thing." But he who becomes corrupted by the unearned increment is simply hungry for more swag.

I started out intending to tell about the men I met in Chicago during the agitated 'nineties. Just about then the town was incubating a lot of notables and was being freely used as a way station on the road to greatness. The incipient celebrities will be listed later on unless I am stopped by some general crusade against the present epidemic of autobiography.

The Drama of a Poor Dub (Continued from page 57)

be done. A long bright run of blood led out over the iron-hard ground, but while he looked, it stopped increasing. A tourniquet—two tourniquets—did the business.

"Hit him in the elbow, and drove his elbow right down through his thigh." He looked at the gray face of Private Kemper and compressed his lips. Then he turned quickly to the gun and examined it. First: one cartridge, lying under the gun, still warm. He picked it up, noting that it was split at the mouth. Belt was not engaged; that was correct. "Gunnery Sergeant: did you personally unload this gun?"

"Yes, sir. Disengaged the belt, drew the bolt handle back several times, raised the cover, and reported unloaded to the Lieutenant, sir."

"Nobody was on it just now?"

"No, sir. Nobody was touchin' it. I was standin' here, gettin' ready to squat in position. Private Cranford was the last man; he'd set down the leg of the tripod an' turned away. Cover fell, and the piece fired."

"That ought not to fire it. Letting the bolt forward, if you don't touch the trigger, ought not to fire it—we'll see. Here's the ambulance."

The ambulance roared alongside, and halted. When they lifted the man to put him in, he began to cry out . . . The Lieutenant came

up, wiping his hands. His face was very red.

"All right, Mr. Howe. Go ahead with your firing. Leave number two off this string. Want to look it over. Got the butts, telephone? Report ready on the firing-line."

The Lieutenant found a quivering recruit who said he didn't feel like firing any more that morning; and the Lieutenant dressed him down in a voice like a whip, so that the feelings of all were relieved. Five minutes later, firing was proceeding steadily.

The Range Officer went on to the hospital. "For he looks very bad to me, Will. I don't like it when they turn the color he did. I'll get over there. And I might as well get the Top started on his papers. We'll be transferin' him to the hospital. He's through with us."

Private Kemper died at fifteen minutes past noon. They did not sing in camp that night, as was their custom—no Prisoner's Song, no carol of the chap who lived down by the Winegar Works; Lulu had rest. The Marine Officer sat in his tent, writing the last draft of his report. The pitiful small papers of Private Kemper were spread out before him.

"No next of kin—drifter, evidently—nobody to write to; I'm glad of that. Poor devil!" He picked up a paper. "Correspondin' with two

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*lies in the youthful shades of
Pompeian powder and rouge*

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So perfectly do the shades of these twin toilettries — Pompeian Beauty Powder and Pompeian Bloom—accord with the tints and tones of the natural skin, that their combined use gives fresh youthful beauty — *instantly*. They add the deft touch that reveals the full blown glory of your complexion.

This powder is soft and velvety to the touch — delicately perfumed — spreads evenly, spreads with an enchanting smoothness.

Pompeian Bloom looks exactly like your own coloring. It does not crumble or break, but keeps compact and usable — and comes off on the puff easily.

All shades of Pompeian Beauty Powder and Bloom for sale at drug and toilet counters. Price 60c per box. In Canada slightly higher.

Shade Chart for POMPEIAN BEAUTY POWDER and POMPEIAN BLOOM

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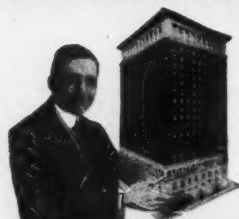
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matrimonial agencies, I see—Kupid's Konfidential Klub, an' so forth—describes himself as home-lovin', fond of pets, an' yearnin' for an affectionate pal. Well—he knows more about . . . things . . . now, than I do . . . Five years in the service, and he walks in front of a machine gun . . . Odd, that—we tried two hundred times to fire that gun that way—and it wouldn't fire . . . Due to be struck off the rolls, I reckon," concluded the Captain.

There was a discreet scratch on the tent-pole. He looked up to see Corporal Bogart standing before him. Corporal Bogart saluted. "Sir, Corporal Bogart has the First Sergeant's permission to speak to the Captain."

"Yes, Bogart. What is it?"

"Sir, about Private Kemper. Private Kemper was in my squad—our squad, sir, and the squad sort of feels—the squad would thank the Captain if the Captain would let the twelfth squad furnish the escort an' all—Private Kemper bein' in the twelfth squad."

"Surely, Bogart. No word yet about services. But the twelfth squad will have the detail, and I'm glad you feel that way."

"Thank the Captain. The twelfth squad will turn out early, an' practise snappin' in on volleys."

One of the Five Million

(Continued from page 65)

yearning thoughtfulness. "Nellie Byrne's going to have one—Christmas."

"I wouldn't wonder," Mrs. Cahill said. "She was merry in January."

For a space both women were silent; Mrs. Kinseeling trying to remember what life was like when one was a free, childless, husbandless woman; Mrs. Cahill transported, by the mere mention of any woman's first baby, to the days when her own were young—her own, who were some day to be the fathers of Harry and Raymond, both men themselves now.

So long ago. So long ago. Herself young, with red cheeks and a firm, rounded young figure. Michael laughing at her—he was the one to laugh. Little Katie—dead on her thir'd birthday—would be fifty now! Little Joe, burrid in his first communion suit, would be fifty-four—the creature! Fears and hopes, fights and felicities long dead—almost forgotten. And herself living on, among younger women, new households, like the lone survivor from a wreck.

"There's eighty-four children in this one house now," Mollie observed presently.

"Well, never mind," said Mrs. Cahill encouragingly. "I met one today, an' a poor little scrap of a ger'l she was, too, that'd be glad enough did she have a big family that she'd go home to. She works in Palley's, an' she has a room up here in—what's this street? She'd be glad enough of a thing like Mart," Mrs. Cahill added, looking at the fat baby who was anchored by his mother's hand, and rolling on his back on the table.

"I remember when I was workin' an' goin' to be married," Mrs. Kinseeling said, "I had a fine job in Woolford's. But I was so afraid Kate Leonard would get Big Mart that I made a novena about it—God help me for a big fool! Him an' me used to go to all the dances, an' many's the prize we won—one night we won fifty dollars, dancin'. An' she was after him, too, Kate Leonard—she died later. Big Mart was a stunnin'-lookin' feller then—you never seen hair as black as his was. All the girls was crazy about him."

"He's a good man," Mrs. Cahill remarked. "Well, he is," his wife agreed absently, after a long silence. She no longer thought of Big Mart as a person; he was just the other half of the struggling partnership that submerged her.

Suddenly her eyes darkened. She wondered if she had strained herself, rubbing out them

things this morning, or whether that gingerly finger-tip of pain at her spine meant anything. She hoisted little Mart to her hip, winced in body and soul. Oh, God help us all, was that what it was? Well, what was the difference when it came? For come it must.

"If I thought I'd get through tomorra' at all, sure I'd stip up to Fifty-six' Street an' see me little ger'rl," Mrs. Cahill said, in a troubled tone.

But Mollie did not hear her. She had reflected that if she went about it right away she might at least get big Mart's dinner well started before she had to send for Mrs. Cahill.

And after all, it was almost eleven o'clock before her good neighbor was summoned. Mrs. Cahill had slipped out after dinner to the big church opposite the big hospital, under the roaring vertebrae of the elevated trains; she had returned to gird herself for her hospitable preparations in a disreputable old "bung'lo'" apron; she had toiled, in her hot, bright little kitchen, until the sweat stood upon her lean little liver-spotted face.

While she baked layers of cup-cake, scraped potatoes, rolled chicken in flour, and wrenched the wedged top from the cocoa tin, Mrs. Cahill had many callers. The building was like a big club to her, and life was only too short to permit her to follow the fascinating and shocking and thrilling events that went on in it.

She and Mrs. Flood—Mrs. Yorke—Mrs. Mulligan—could murmur on for hours while their lean, worn, experienced fingers peeled onions, or darned shreds of baggy socks, or stirred saucerless cups of strong tea. With the sublime instinct of children they mingled, here in this shabby and poverty-ridden old building, of dark and dirty brick, the corporal and the spiritual works of mercy.

Mrs. Cahill had her chicken fried and smothered in gravy, her frosting mixed and her golden brown layers of cake cooling when Big Mart came across the hall, with little Mart on his shoulder, to say that Mollie didn't feel any too good, and would Mrs. Cahill please step over?

Alert and comprehending and blinking significantly, Mrs. Cahill nodded, dismissed the Creeley children, who were scraping her frosting bowl, wiped her shining face, changed her apron, and prepared to step over as briskly as if her long, hot Saturday had not commenced with the usual wild trilling of her alarm-clock, and her usual drowsy "Oh, shut up, Bin!" seventeen hours before.

Big Mart politely waited for her, eying the wide-awake, elated baby he carried with scorn and suspicion.

"This one's stuck on himself that he isn't in bed and asleep long ago!" he commented.

Mrs. Cahill, emerging from her microscopic tumbled lair of a bedroom ready for the fray, snapped off the kitchen gas and ushered her visitors ahead of her into the hall. Mollie Kinseeling's four rooms were just back of her own; small rooms, too, and seeming more like dark, packed closets on this hot night, with everything in disorder, and the woman of the house ill.

There were several other women there, looking troubled and sympathetic; they were young women who could not instantly assume command, as Mrs. Cahill did. Immediately she delegated them to gather soggy, abandoned baby garments, to clear the jumbled sink, to put on the big kettle.

Mollie was limping distressedly about, catching at the backs of chairs as she went.

"Well, if a thing has a beginnin', it has an end!" Mrs. Cahill reminded her courageously. "Take Martie over to my place, Mart," she directed the husband and father, "an' see can you get him to sleep! Now's the time we wish we was min, isn't it, Mollie?" she asked pitifully, watching the other woman closely and concernedly, even while she seemed to be only cheerfully busy with kettle and sheets, newspapers and a great roll of cotton.

She did not leave the Kinseelings until three o'clock. Mollie, drained of half her life's

Letters with personality

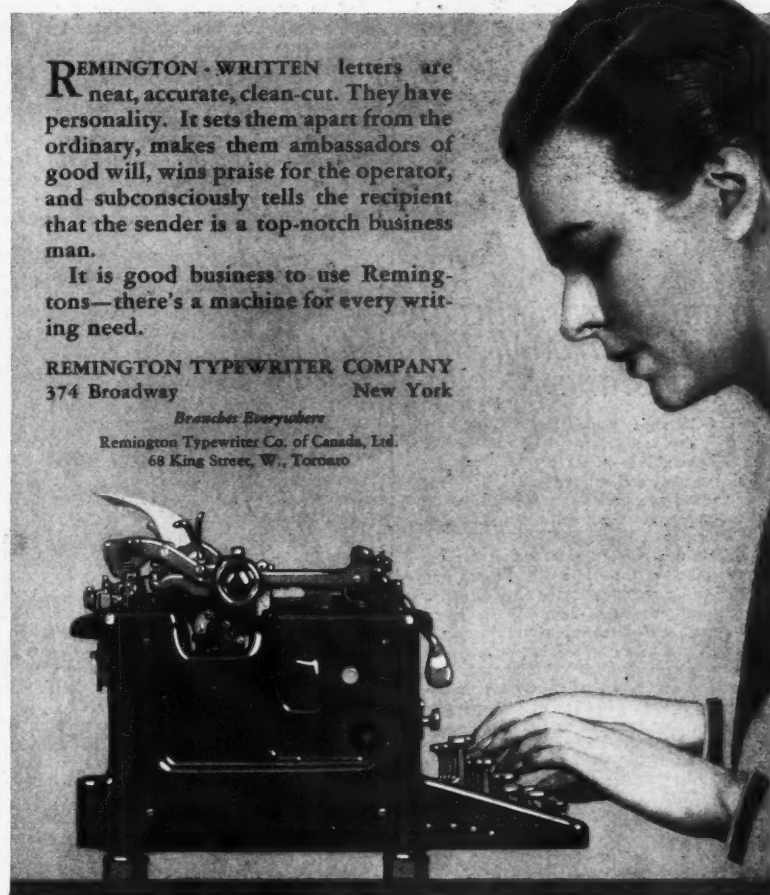
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blood, was asleep then; great damp violet pockets about her sunken eyes. "The young boy"—he was to be Joseph Ignatius in a few days—was asleep, too. Big Mart had fallen into slumber first of all, on the same couch-bed that held Mary and the four-year-old Tim.

As for Martin junior, still friendly and happy and awake, Mrs. Cahill charitably carried him back with her to her own bed. Martin Kinseeling worked in the subway and was on the Sunday shift, and he would have to be up in the morning at six, as usual—today the bread-winner for wife and three babies, tomorrow he would awaken the bread-winner for wife and four. He could take no chances with his job.

Her little guest did not cry, but he was irrepressibly wakeful and conversational. "He's a smart one, hardly three yet!" Mrs. Cahill had to concede as he rolled on the pillow, staring in fascination at the gas, and conversing.

The night was hot. Mrs. Cahill dozed nervously, always with a sense of responsibility for Martin, awakened, sighed and stirred her aching bones, dozed again.

Sometimes, in the wakening intervals, she thought of Gertie. She wondered what Gertie had done about her beau. Poor little thing, it wasn't a safe position for a girl—the woman of the house away and no mother or grandma to guide her.

Night-lights from the street angled on Mrs. Cahill's distempered walls. They were gone—and there was a fire somewhere. No, it was the summer dawn, smiting the exhausted city at half past four o'clock. The child was asleep now.

Mrs. Cahill took out her cake, filled and frosted it carefully, inspected potatoes and chicken, mixed dough. Rolls worked fast this hot weather; she had been afraid to prepare them the night before.

"I cud lay in bed there for a week!" she thought, looking enviously at Martin, drinking sleep as horses drink water from deep mossy troughs.

At seven, when already she seemed to have been up and about for a whole day, she went across the hall to inspect the Kinseelings. Mollie was awake; a neighbor, in hat and suit, and carrying her prayer-book, had stopped in on the way to Mass. The baby pulsed like a pollywog, nosing, blindly pugilistic, against his pale, smiling mother's shoulder; Mollie thought that of all things in the world she'd dearly love a taste of tea.

She couldn't say it, none of them could say it, but they all knew what it felt like—the deep, abiding joy of knowing the ordeal over. Sunda' mornin', was it? And the Kinseeling baby had come, and all Mollie had to do was lay there like a queen and have them wait on her. Let Big Martin try the morning struggle with little garments and dishes, and bottles and safety-pins, for once!

Triumph, ecstasy, shone in her eyes. Sure it was a very fine young boy she had beside her; the doctor said he never seen a livelier feller than this one. Mollie sipped tea, creamed and sugared to perfection, in long grateful swallows. She had had a good sleep, and she felt something grand. "I'll be up this day week," she predicted.

"You're surely one of God's good women," Martin senior said to Mrs. Cahill gruffly as she filled the kettle with a drumming noise from the tap, jerked chairs about, flung baby linen into a zinc tub.

"Ye mustn't miss Mass," Mollie murmured drowsily, from her flat, gray, lifeless pillow.

"I'll go to High," said Mrs. Cahill, with a glance at the clock. "I thought maybe I'd start early an' go down be Fifty-six' Street an' see a little ger'l there," she mused, half aloud. But it was too late for that now. Lucky for her if she wasn't late for Mass. She decided that she couldn't do anything today for Gertie Cassidy except say a prayer, and that she would do with all her heart. The Lord must find somebody else to look after the poor child; Mrs. Cahill's hands were full!

The hot day raced by her. She seemed to be achieving nothing as the hours flew. Home from church, hot and breathless, she must stop in and glance at Mollie again; butter buns for the children, open a bottle of milk. The Flaherty boy had had his head cracked by a brick; she had to go in there. It was nothing at all, praises be to God, but it cost her half an hour.

At three she went out in burning, silent heat to make the long trip to the big hospital and sit beside dying Ellen Rourke. Ellen's eyes were shining with the light that never was on land or sea; an unbeautiful fifty-year-old woman dying of cancer in a public hospital, but there was strange peace, even joy, in her thin face.

"They had the priest to me. It's very sick I think I do be."

"It's all in God's hands, woman dear'r."

"It is, indade. But it's me little one-eeen I does be thinkin' about, layin' here. He have an auntie in Chicagaw, an' sure they has a kind feelin' to the choild, cud we but get him there."

"We'll do that, Ellen, have you no fears, dear'r?"

"Well, God made yure kind, Mrs. Cahill dear, that's stud to me since me trouble begun."

And so on and on, until the nurse glanced significantly at Mrs. Cahill, and Mrs. Cahill, without an answering flickering of her eyelid remarked that Ellen was drowsy, and that there was nothing at all like sleep.

Ellen being left to sleep, deep, deep, deep, Mrs. Cahill heaved one profound weary sigh and threaded the burning still streets of Sunday afternoon again, across the hot city, her thoughts divided between the serenely departing soul and the minutiae of last preparations for her grandsons' dinner.

They were waiting for her when she got home; it was much later than she dreamed; it was five o'clock, God help us. She had to take off her bonnet and change her dress with Lizzie and the young baby providing confusing company as she did so; she had to get out food and season dishes under the fire of four pairs of eyes.

Raymond sat on the table when she wanted to set it; Lizzie was prevented from a second generous salting of the mashed potatoes only by an eldritch screech from the old woman. Harry joshed his grandmother about his future wife.

"Why don't you find me a girl, grandma? Here I am twenty-three—"

"I'll get you one—hand me that spoon, Harry. I'll get you one that'll cur'r your hair for you good!" the grandmother threatened.

"Lissen, grandma. I want a little one, about your size, with red hair—a nice little innocent girl that'll think I know a lot."

It made her think of somebody—a little pale girl with red hair. Who was it—when was it—where—

Mrs. Cahill was annoyed that she couldn't place the memory. A pale little girl with red hair—

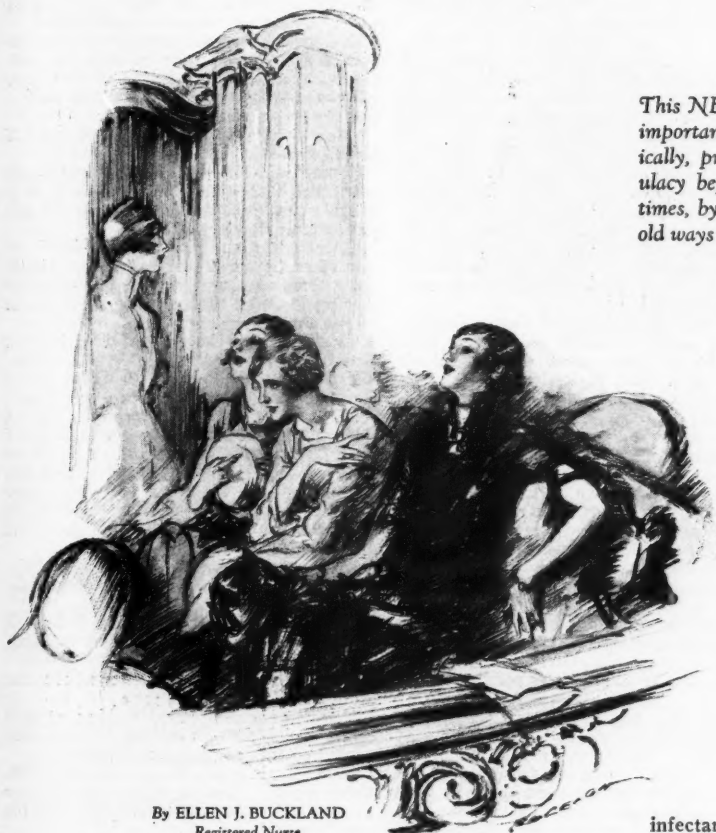
She was almost too tired to eat her dinner, and she felt the occasion vaguely a failure, even though the boys scraped the platter and praised her cake to the skies. After the feast they sat wearily, idly talking, until Big Mart Kinseeling came over at seven with little Mart, and with a pound of sausages and a coffee ring that he hoped to eat in the Cahill kitchen.

He was made hospitably welcome; Harry took charge of little Mart, Mrs. Cahill heated up mashed potato and coffee for her guest. Big Mart, gratefully eating, told them what an angel of mercy their grandmother was—and not to him and his only, but to the whole house; and Mrs. Cahill gave him a sparrow's peck of a shove on the shoulder, and blinked tears from her bright little monkey eyes, and told him to go on with himself!

Then came talk of the trip to Lizzie's folks in Brooklyn, and good-byes, and bundling of the sweating baby, despite the heat, and Harry trying to give grandma a twenty, and Ray

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gently, humbly trying to give her a five-dollar bill, and Mrs. Cahill slapping hilariously at them with vigorous, lean little hands and refusing pointblank. But she knew that she would find the money in her flat old purse when they had gone, and she began to think about a new suit for poor Ellen's boy, so that he'd go to his aunt in Chicago looking decent—the creature.

When they had departed into the hot bright city night, she went over to the Kinselings' again, washed sleepy little faces, tumbled weeping little forms into bed, and brewed a final cup of tea for Mollie, who was weary and nervous now.

There was half an hour of murmuring, comforting, broken phrases of relief and gratitude before Mrs. Cahill came back to her own apartment at nine o'clock for a sweating hour of dish-washing and "redding" generally in the demoralized kitchen.

"I'm kilt," she said aloud. Her bare hairy arm swept up to wipe her wet forehead. Mollie—the baby—the doctor—the solemn shrill voices of the boys' choir, at "High," swelling through the incense-scented church, poor Ellen Rourke, dying composedly and bravely, dear little Stan goo'ing at his father's grandmother—the day's pageant went through her tired mind.

Suddenly she thought of Gertie Cassidy, and the thought was like pain. Poor little wishful-faced thing. Mrs. Cahill wouldn't ponder the problem of Gertie.

If Gertie's beau had come up from Philadelphia he'd be calling on her now; he'd be gone now, if he was going back tonight. On Tuesday Mrs. Cahill would certainly seek Gertie out, among the hundreds of girls at Palley's, and find out what had happened.

Monday, even better, she'd stop at Gertie's—the first house beyond Tenth, on the up-town side, across Fifty-sixth, first floor—and see if she couldn't do the child a good turn.

She glanced at the clock. Twenty minutes past nine. If she'd thought of it earlier she could easily have stepped up there tonight.

Har'd on a mother to leave a gentle, innocent little ger'l like Gertie alone in the wor'ld. Gertie seemed such a poor little timid thing.

This thought pierced her heart at half past nine, with the kitchen but half cleared. At twenty-three minutes to ten Mrs. Cahill was walking briskly down Tenth Avenue, her bonnet and her best dress on, her heart filled with an odd, urgent hammering. That little ger'l—she might be anybody's daughter. It was beholden on an old woman that she'd stand to a child like that.

Of course the young one had tillygraphed her friend that he'd not come up at all, and Mrs. Cahill wud have her walk for her pains. Or else the ger'l wud be safe in bed and asleep, unless she'd be sittin' out on the stoop in the heat, laughin' wit' the neighbors.

Fifty-sixth; the bank; and the first dark brownstone doorway beyond, with a few wilted occupants sitting silent on the steps.

Into the black mouth of the entrance Mrs. Cahill plunged; she knew her way—these tenements were all planned alike. A long, pitch-black neck of hall, two doors, under the stairs far in the back. She knocked on the left-hand door—no answer. Everything dark. On the right hand there was dim light above through the transom; perhaps that was Gertie's? Mrs. Cahill knocked again.

The tall house was dark, silent, above and about her. A baby wailed far up-stairs, and out in the hot world somewhere there was a sharp, distant fall of thunder.

A third time Mrs. Cahill knocked; there were feet moving inside. Gertie opened the door a few inches, stood looking bewilderedly out.

"Oh, it's—you," Gertie stammered, with a queer smile.

Behind her a man's voice said sharply in a whisper, "Shut it! Get rid of him and shut it!"

Mrs. Cahill put her solid old shoe into the gap, pushed the door open, stepped within.

She was in a dim bedroom; there was a lighted kitchen beyond.

Gertie faced her, frightened, caught at her hand. There was a man, thin, wiry, sharp of feature, in the kitchen, working with tools at the solid brick of the east wall.

"He's fixin' it so I can have a radio," faltered Gertie.

The man smiled, rose, held out his hand. "I guess you're Gertie's grandma?" he said. But he had gone a sickly white.

"I'm Gertie's grandma," Mrs. Cahill said measuredly. He and she looked at each other steadily a moment; the man continued to smile, but the old woman did not smile.

In the silence his tool dropped—the hammer with which he had been tapping the wall. It struck, as it fell, a length of lead pipe, lying near the little pyramid of fallen bricks and plaster on the floor.

"He's goin' to put all that back so's it'll never show!" Gertie explained nervously.

"I see," said Mrs. Cahill. "An' what'd you need that for?—that's an ugly devil of a lookin' thing," she said, picking up the lead pipe, after a strange silence.

"I thought your grandma was sick?" the man asked Gertie. There was a menace in his voice, there was an ugly twist to his thin lips that made Gertie suddenly turn white, as he had done.

"But, George—George—" she faltered. Her bewildered eyes went to Mrs. Cahill, but the older woman was holding George Reynolds with a stony and unmoving gaze.

"There's forty men or more settin' out on them stoops," Mrs. Cahill now remarked, in a breathless, quick voice, with a little jerk of her bony shoulder toward the hall behind her. The observation, irrelevant as it might have sounded, appeared to impress the man; he remained motionless, his shrewd gaze fixed upon the old woman.

In the pause, Gertie whimpered suddenly, in bewilderment and fear, and pressed the back of her wrist against her mouth.

Suddenly, with an oath, the man had caught his coat from a chair, his hat from the table; there was a quick rush of movement in the room, the table was knocked over, the door slammed. Reynolds was gone.

The two women stood looking at each other, pallid-faced, breathing through their dilated nostrils, reading each other's eyes.

Presently, in a solemn, droning voice, Mrs. Cahill spoke. "God be praised that to all the other sins I've got on me soul I didn't add this one!" she said.

"But what was it—what was he doin'—what is it?" Gertie stammered.

"Look at his hammer, look where he'd hammered the wall down. He knew tomorrow was a holiday, an' nobody'd catch him at his dir'ty work!" Mrs. Cahill murmured, stirring the powdered plaster with her foot. A faint dust arose, settled again.

"He said he'd fix me a radio—an' the Rinn always wanted one," Gertie explained anxiously.

"Through the bank he'd fix it, that was his game," Mrs. Cahill muttered, half to herself. "God forgive him, he might of done annythin' he would, wit' that," she added, again studying the length of gas-pipe.

"He said the pipe was to carry wires through the wall!" Gertie explained eagerly.

Mrs. Cahill gave her a mild, compassionate glance. The little red head that pipe might have laid low was unable to estimate the danger into which it had so gaily thrust itself, and perhaps it was as well.

"We'll take these things, Ger'tie, an' slip up an' see me nephew, Joe Foley, at the police station," the older woman then decided. "He'll keep your name out of it, anyway. God help us all, you'd have had your name in the papers if I hadn't come in!"

"You think George—George was goin' to rob the bank?" Gertie asked, whitening again.

"I don't think annythin' about it, dear! I know his kind."

"But he oughter have known—he oughter

have known that I'd never help him do that!"

Gertie exclaimed indignantly.

She looked so little, so white-faced, so disarmingly red-headed, that Mrs. Cahill couldn't let her have the full horror of it yet. She merely said non-committally:

"You'd not know what they'd think or what they'd mane—God pity all sinners! Now you pack your bag, an' putt on your hat, an' come along wit' me. You can sleep on my lounge for a while, until you'd get a husband to look out for you!"

"Oh, Mrs. Cahill, you're awful good!" said Gertie, in a grateful burst, hastening to obey. She trotted beside her old guardian, through the hot street, chattering like a child. "Mind you, I was gettin' terribly nervous at the way he acted," she confessed eagerly. "He come in about four o'clock, an' he says we'd have a little dinner all by ourselves, an' that he'd fix me a radio. Well, when I seen him goin' at the wall it give me a sort of tur'n, an' I told him would I run down an' ast the janitor was it all right. He says no, leave him be, he'd fix it so's it never would show at all. An' he had a bag of food with him, coffee an' bread an' beans, an' he says maybe I'd let him stay the night an' get him a cup of coffee tomorra', but I said no, I'd not see myself doin' that. He says fir'st it'd be a hole on'y the size of a fifty-cent piece, but look at what he done! Sure, I could put me head through it.

"He kep' astin'," the girl continued innocently, "would anyone come in, an' I kep' sayin' no, that the Rinnas was down to Moriches, an' that me grandma was sick in bed. An' when you fir'st knocked at me door, he wouldn't leave me go answer it, he caught at me wrist an' clapped his hand over me mout—the way I can feel him yet! But the second time he says, 'Go send whoever it is away—tell him you're layin' down, that you feel sick,' he says. He scared the wits out of me!" she ended, with simplicity.

"God loves a fool!" Mrs. Cahill commented patiently.

"What did you say, Mrs. Cahill?"

Gertie had turned to her, under a bright street-lamp. And suddenly Mrs. Cahill remembered who the slim little girl with the red hair was.

"You might as well call me grandma, Gertie," she said resignedly.

Marcus Loew

(Continued from page 47)

"I've always wanted to take a look at a rehearsal. Gee," he added recklessly, "I'd 'a' paid twenty cents to attend a rehearsal."

With a gesture of despair, the baffled manager retired and the show was allowed to run its course.

Next day the skies were fair and the patronage considerably heavier. Indeed, all during that first fortnight the receipts mounted steadily, but even when they were at their peak they were dark with the threat of bankruptcy for the new management. Eventually the first Loew theater returned a profit of \$65,000 on its first season.

What turned the tide, however, was no feat of managerial cunning, no stroke of genius in showmanship. The theater owed its success to the stage-hands. They made it. In their behalf, however, it is only fair to say that they didn't mean to do it.

The stage-hands form one of the most skillfully generated, perfectly disciplined and potentially wielded unions in all the poor old union-ridden theater. Of course the manager has his troubles with the Actors' Equity, with its grim, newfangled rules about the actors being paid regularly every week. Then the federated musicians deal sternly with him in kindred matters, and on tour he feels the tyranny of the truckmen, without whose horny-handed cooperation he cannot get his sets and his costumes to and from the railway station. Finally just last spring the downtrodden

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playwrights rose in one bristling body, met and laid down the only terms on which they would consent to evolve dramatic literature henceforth.

But of all these hostile tribes, the one that makes the manager toss and mutter in his sleep o' nights is the stage crew. The carpenters, scene-shifters, electricians and property-men have so jealous a regard for their own privileges and so crushing a solidarity when facing the foe that they constitute the most formidable union in the theater.

Wherefore the managers growl restively at the mere mention of this doughy union—all except Marcus Loew. In his heart there must always be a soft spot for the stage-hands. They made him what he is today. But, as hereinbefore reported, at least they didn't mean to do it.

Their strictly unintentional aid was given in the early and gloomy days of his effort to establish small-time vaudeville in Brooklyn. To this effort, Brooklyn at first remained not so much hostile as blandly unconscious that he was making it at all. Therefore the weekly loss was so painful that Loew fretted at every needless expense and made war at once on the institution of the permanent stage crew. His bill was changed twice weekly and each time he wanted to vary the settings somewhat, but if he were going to be compelled on that account to keep a small mob of stage-hands sitting around comfortably at his expense, he would rather leave the scenery in place all year, no matter how his "center-door fancy" palled on Brooklyn.

I suppose that such managerial mutiny would be impossible in these piping times, but the union was younger then and the desperate Loew not only fired his stage crew but lived to tell the tale. The union declared war and that was the turning of the tide. Indeed, the first time it was vividly called to the attention of the neighborhood that one Marcus Loew had opened a vaudeville show down in Willoughby Street was when the sidewalks of that thoroughfare were patrolled by angry but conspicuous pickets bearing huge placards denouncing the infamous manager within.

But this small and fiercely local outburst of publicity was as nothing to what followed. As soon as they could get around to it, the offended stage-hands set forth their grievances on small folders and mailed them to every union man in Brooklyn. By the following week there was not a union printer or truckman or bricklayer in the town who did not know that a new ten-cent vaudeville house had been opened in their midst. Perhaps they were one and all properly outraged by the new impresario's treatment of their brethren in labor, but in a sufficient number the appropriate indignation was not allowed to dampen a warm curiosity to see the show. At all events business jumped. It soared. And from that moment the goose hung high.

That was the first of the Loew theaters. You might look for it to have remained as the mother theater of the chain or at least to bear, even under some other management, a small commemorative tablet. But you must remember that in New York a theater no sooner opens its doors than apparently a thousand hands itch to demolish it. And just as Consolidated Gas is now rearing a huge headquarters on the site of New York's long-treasured Academy of Music, so the first Loew theater gave way long ago to a substitution of the Edison Company.

As for the newest Loew theater, it is perilous business to name it in any publication more leisurely than a ticker. By the time these words make their sedate way into print, I would not put it past him to be in bland possession of the Metropolitan Opera House—someone is going to get it, certainly—or the Grosseschauspielhaus in Berlin. But with that much finger-crossing, one might reasonably name as the probable candidate the great Empire Theater modeled after the Capitol in New York and rising now on the site of the old Empire in Leicester Square—that celebrated

commons of London night life to which, in the refrain of Tipperary, Tommy Atkins was singing a wistful farewell as he took the long and ugly road to Mons a dozen years ago.

For Loew not only controls seventeen theaters in France and is creditor of a German chain to the amount of several millions, but he is knee-deep in the arduous and ticklish business of entertaining the English. Indeed, I saw him last in London. He had arrived just in time to step squarely on the hornet's nest stirred up by the first presentation of "The Big Parade."

This magnificent picture, with its parochial suggestion that the war began when America went into it, was a trifle trying to the British, who would have enjoyed it more if its first reel had shown, for instance, just a few glimpses of the three years preceding April 6, 1917—just a hint of the contrast between the French and British youth struggling in the shambles of the Western front while their cousins overseas lolled on country club verandas or whistled behind the plows or trudged under campus elms to sheltered classrooms.

No wonder three reviews of the picture in London were headed "How America Won the War," expressing a natural exasperation hopelessly complicated by the fact that, despite innumerable columns exhorting the English to patronize English films, the average Briton persists in preferring the American films for the selfish and sadly unpatriotic reason that they are better entertainment.

So there was dynamite lying around when the sparks began to fly from "The Big Parade" and Marcus Loew was stepping softly. There was always a buzzing crowd around his table at the Ivy Restaurant, a kind of miniature Algonquin, where you are likely to see St. John Ervine doing himself well with a duck and A. A. Milne hovering over the *hors d'œuvres* as though in the throes of composing a new book for Christopher Robin entitled "When We Were Very Hungry."

On this day I saw an ink-stained wretch from Fleet Street edging close to the Loew group in the hope of getting some glowing news from the front in the merry war between British and American films.

Before stalking his game, he first verified his identification.

He buttonholed James Gleason and asked: "Who's that little man with the big spectacles and the blue shirt?"

"That," said the author of "Is Zat So?" "is Loew, the poor Indian."

The English reporter edged closer. A stud game, to be played at the American club that night, was being recruited at the moment but had encountered an obstacle in the poor Indian's firm rule about getting to bed each night at eleven, the very hour, as it happened, when the game was to commence. So Marcus Loew, though able to look despondent even when blessed with aces back to back, was flatly refusing to sit in.

"I am an old man," he protested, "I'm a grandfather. I'm in my fifties."

"Then," asked Irving Berlin, pointing to the pastel youthfulness of the blue shirt aforementioned, "what do you mean by wearing that?"

Loew chuckled and related his grief when he discovered on board ship that, on leaving for England with him, the shirt had carelessly left its collar back in America. But Mrs. Loew had promptly made him one to take its place. Berlin was a little puzzled as to where even that resourceful helpmeet could have found material to match on shipboard. Loew beamed with pride and whispered:

"She made it out of the shirt-tail."

The English reporter went away discouraged. There was simply no news in these Americans.

And soon Loew himself went away also—not from the Ivy, merely, but from London, from England, from abroad. It was not the snoots which the English critics made at his beloved "Big Parade" which turned him homeward nor even the dread round of complimentary banquets which are such agony to a

dyspeptic grandfather used to the tender solicitude of his own cook. Rather was it a frank flight from that fish-out-of-water helplessness which afflicts any executive who has built himself so complex a staff that he no longer knows how to do anything by himself. The Loew organization is a vast structure occupying floor on floor of the sky-scraper which rises over his State Theater on Broadway. In such a chronicle as this one, the statement that Loew did this or Loew did that is merely a shortcut for Loew, Inc., in turn a group name for a network of friends, partners, allies, neighbors, folks.

His twin sons came from college into the parental business and are staggering now under its responsibilities. There are some grandchildren around the premises. I have no doubt that, twenty years hence, you will find one of them manager of the Gaumont Place in Paris and another in charge of the new Loew chain in Indo-China.

The ascent in fortune has been shared by a group of coworkers. Nicholas Schenck, brother of the Joseph Schenck that sponsors the Talmadge girls and married one of them, is second in command at Loew, Inc. He has been second in command since the days when there wasn't much to command and all the affairs could have been managed handily from one small office.

I think it is important to note that the Mr. Bernstein, who rules over the Loew treasury, is, save for a certain weathering by the years, the same Mr. Bernstein who was chief and only bookkeeper for Marcus Loew, fur dealer, when the headquarters were in Rivington Street and the honorarium for the job was eighteen dollars a week. And the little down-town printer with whom, at the age of eleven, Marcus Loew edited, published and distributed an intensely local weekly entitled "The East Side Gazette"—circulation, at its peak, 500 copies—is still down-town and, I suppose, still little, but his press is kept busy with the programs, handbills and dodgers of the Loew theaters.

Of late years the activities of the house of Loew have been extended to include the making as well as the exhibiting of pictures. Such extension is inevitable. If you should ever find yourself master of several hundred theaters, you would discover the emotions of one who keeps a ravenous dragon outside his cave which he must feed each morning. You grow gray with fear lest rival houses coax all the better films and plays away from you. In the ensuing panic you immediately begin turning out plays and pictures in an effort to be self-sustaining.

In this way, Loew has acquired one studio after another, all now consolidated under the Metro-Goldwyn name, and to this he has more recently added the Cosmopolitan Pictures, which revolve around the art and the beauty of Marion Davies. Thus such celebrated pictures as "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," "Ben Hur" and "The Big Parade" belonged to Marcus Loew by the time they were ready to be seen.

There is some chance, there is even an ironic probability, that he will continue this activity so strenuously that before long he will not have theaters enough for their outlet. Then, I suppose, he will build some more theaters. And so on and so on till he drops from exhaustion without its once having occurred to him to wonder why he should ever leave that small but mean golf course which dips over the green acres that skirt his marble palace on Long Island.

But chiefly, I think, he regards himself as a builder of theaters and in all the chain from Chicago to Cairo none gives him so much satisfaction as the shiny playhouse he reared some years ago in Avenue B. It took the place of two dingy tenements which had stood at 79 and 81. Into a flat in one of these, more than half a century ago, a waiter from Vienna and a German girl whom he had met in this country moved shortly after their marriage, and there, in a windowless room, Marcus Loew was born.

THE END

The Old Countess (Continued from page 27)

happy one, of course," said Jill. She turned her smiling eyes upon her husband, thinking that he looked a fitting hero to any fairy-tale. She was happy to be doing anything with Dick. So often she was alone; though Jill was seldom conscious of feeling lonely.

"Some fairy-tales are sinister, you know," Graham objected. "Perhaps if you'd seen the old lady you would feel that this one would be. She's rather witch-like and one can imagine her running a long needle into the princess's heart more easily, I'm afraid, than waving the wand for Cinderella."

"But when princesses have the needles run into their hearts they come out all right in the end," said optimistic Jill. "Fairy-tales may be sinister, but they always end well. I wasn't thinking so much of your old lady, though. It was just the feeling of starting on an adventure, with you. And everything being different from anything we've ever done before. It all feels different today."

"Nice child," Graham smiled at her. Jill's fundamental trust in life often amused and often touched him.

Half-way up the shoulder of the cliff the *grande route* swept suddenly to the left, on level ground, while, on the right, the ascent continued, more steeply, by a narrow, stony road.

"This must be the way she told me of," said Graham. "And it's quite true that one wouldn't care to take the car up it."

But Jill had stopped short and was staring at a high wall that ran along the *grande route*.

Above it, bristling against the background of forest green, was an extraordinary array of what looked like nothing in the world so much as large tin tubs turned upside down and mounted on stilts. There were myriads of them; and amidst the quietly rustling solidities they had a grisly look.

"What in heaven's name is that?" said Jill.

"This," said Graham, after a silent survey, "is evidently the cemetery. Charming, isn't it?" He was less startled than Jill; perhaps because he was by nature more acquiescent in the grisly. "Come along. It's rather picturesque. A variant on Velasquez's *Las Lanzas*."

Reluctantly Jill followed him round to the high grille which yielded to his thrust.

They found themselves in a graveled, orderly necropolis, a *Galerie Lafayette*, a *Bon Marché* of death. It seemed almost to display counters and to advertise good worth for the money. The poorer graves were sheltered by the high-perched tin tabernacles; the more opulent by stone chapels. There were streets of them, standing face to face. Some were solid and some were flimsy, but they all expressed the conviction that they were doing the right thing in the right way.

"It's like the gentleman with a ribbon across his chest who gets up, in evening clothes, in broad daylight, at a French function to make a speech," Graham observed, sardonically gratified by a new experience. "It civilizes death, you see, Jill; classifies it and introduces it to society. But I wonder whether the tin tubs are a local invention. I never saw them before."

"I never imagined anything so horrible," said Jill, standing to look from side to side with a dismay almost indignant. "It will haunt my dreams."

The cemetery was not all reclaimed from nature and dedicated to horror. In one corner—Jill observed it from where she stood—a broad space of grass still grew green and thick and the chestnut branches, over the wall, dropped their russet fruits upon it. She moved away, drawn towards this oasis.

There, against the wall, she saw another grave; a grave different from all the others. It was marked only by a heave of sod and by the simplest headstone; and deep in grass, the chestnut branches sweeping low above it, it had a solitary yet cradled look.

Graham joined her as she stood beside it. At the head three glass vases held sprays of autumn roses, faded, yet with a lingering color, and a wreath of heather at the foot was still fresh. Marthe Ludérac was the name upon the stone, and above it: "*Priez pour elle*." The dates of birth and death showed that she had died six years ago.

Jill and Graham stood, strangely silenced. "Why is she all alone like this?" Jill whispered. "She has gone as far away from the others as she could."

"She shows her taste in that," said Graham. "But she was forty. Not young. We can't make a romance about her."

"No; not a romance. But a tragedy perhaps," said Jill. "I have a feeling that she was dreadfully unhappy."

"Most people are, my dear. Even the people over there, under their tin tubs, suffered, you may be sure."

"I have a feeling that she suffered differently," said Jill. "It's because she suffered differently that she's here, quite by herself; with no family about her."

"She was a stranger in the place, perhaps." "Perhaps. But someone who lives here must have put the flowers. Marthe Ludérac. It's an unhappy name, I think."

"I think it's rather a heroic name. Rather a cruel, strange name, too. It's gentle; and sword-like. Marthe Ludérac," Graham repeated. "A Marthe Ludérac might have been a provincial Royalist and fought against the Republican bands. She might have been drowned in the river down there—in a *noyade*; she might have been guillotined. It's a name to make history out of; there's a sound in it of disaster, and beauty. And she makes me uncomfortable. As you say, she was unhappy. Come; let's go away from her."

They turned from the grave and retraced their steps, in silence, to the grille.

Now they took the road that led up among the chestnuts, for the *grande route* left the forest at the cemetery wall and swept in a noble curve round the promontory, far above the river. But in this narrow, stony track the trees grew closely overhead and deep gullies, worn by the rains, ran on either side under crumbling banks of moss. Another turn showed them the forest, still climbing, while, on their left, the steep hillside dropped away towards the river in ledge after ledge of scantily growing vineyard. A dilapidated thatched cottage stood among the vineyards and a rough mountain path led down from it and disappeared over the edge of rock. On their right they saw a cove of dark sycamores and rising above them were the chimneys of the *manoir*.

The *manoir* stood behind high plastered walls and when they passed through the gate, that clanged a loud bell at their passage, they found themselves before the saddest house.

It was long and low and damp and somber, with two rows of curtainless windows looking out at the sycamores and a tiled roof dark with moss and lichen. Green stains ran down over the ochre-colored walls and in the flower plots before it were only pale, degenerate Michaelmas daisies. One might have thought it uninhabited but for the barking of a dog. He stumbled round a corner of the house, old and half blind, and retreated precipitately on seeing them standing there. But at an upper window a head that Graham recognized appeared.

It was quickly withdrawn and a voice was heard calling shrilly: "Joseph! Joseph! On sonnet! Dépêchez-vous!"

The voice descended, still calling, and running steps clattered and shuffled within as they stood before the door from which the paint had long since peeled and blistered. "*Le thé! Le thé!*" called the voice in tones tragically imperative.

Then, after an interval of silence, the door was slowly opened and an old man, derelict, nondescript, morose, appeared in the doorway.

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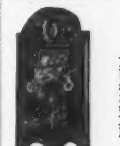
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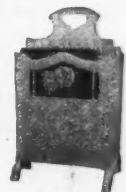
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He showed no sign of the excitement that reigned within and looked at them with an unmoved if unhostile gravity.

"*Madame la Comtesse est chez elle?*" Jill inquired. After the sadness that the cemetery had left with her, she felt this scene restoring. It made her want to laugh.

"*Mais oui, mais oui,*" he answered, as one who knew, with her, that the fact was self-evident, and standing back to let them enter, "*Entrez donc, messieurs et dames.*"

He wore a tattered gray linen jacket, black and white checked trousers, black felt slippers and, oddest touch, a frayed white tie very correctly placed. His face was sunken yet swollen, with folded lips and small, bright eyes; his spare hair, combed carefully forward over his baldness, was still almost black and he looked like an ancient rat emerging from a drain.

The hall they entered was high and empty. It was lighted by a glass door at the other end, through which one could see the apple-trees of a *jardin potager*, and by a tall window placed over the stairs that mounted, with an effect of dignity, to the upper story. A vast, faded, pretentious battle-piece hung on a wall.

Joseph threw open a door and announced in impartial tones: "*Madame la Comtesse descendra tout de suite.*"

The drawing-room in which Graham and Jill found themselves was unlike any room that they had ever seen. It was so chill and pale and formal that it seemed as far from life as the cemetery had been.

Yet, long and spacious, the northern light shining in from four windows upon its polished floors, a frieze of pallid water-lilies running round its dim green walls, it had the charm of a perfect consistency. Two sofas, symmetrically placed, and a dozen stiff carved chairs, were upholstered in gray satin sprigged with green and purple flowers. On a round mahogany table, its one leg hideously carved, stood a stereopticon with its box of photographs, a casket of ebony inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and a large gilt cage where a gray parrot, a bit of apple in his claw, paused from the act of eating to look at them with sideways head. There were accurately placed book-cases of carved ebony holding books bound in black and red, and round the walls hung a series of large, faintly tinted landscapes, painted in water-color and framed in gilt.

Graham looked about him, absorbed in interest and amusement, while Jill's eyes turned to the large, deep, battered *bergère* and small attendant table that stood near the fireplace. A yellow, dog-eared novel and a pair of spectacles lay on the table and beside them was a bowl of common kitchen-ware with a spoon in it. This had contained, Jill felt sure, the old lady's luncheon, and so human, so helpless was the avowal of age and infirmity, poverty and loneliness, that the fireside group affected her as a voice speaking in the silence might have done; a voice speaking piteously.

From the *bergère* and the bowl she looked up at the marble mantelpiece. Above it a great gilt mirror, reaching to the cornice, reflected all the light of the room, and on it stood a tall gilt clock, slowly ticking, two candelabra and two glass vases filled with sprays of fading autumn roses. As she saw them, Jill's heart stood still.

She could not trace, for the moment of distress and mystery, the memory that so affected her. Then it came sharply. They were the same roses as those on Marthe Ludérac's grave and arranged, surely, by the same hand. It must have been Madame de Lamouderie who had placed them there. She must have known Marthe Ludérac; and been fond of her; and sorry for her. And it was upon this background of mystery and pity and fidelity that, as the door opened and the old lady entered, Jill first saw her.

Madame de Lamouderie wore her frayed and rusty black; but her hair had been hastily dressed under a black lace mantilla and instead of battered boots she wore high-heeled satin

shoes. Her old lips were rouged, her old cheek smeared with white, and she advanced towards them with a very grand air.

Jill gazed at her; amazed, arrested. She was trying to see her as the friend of Marthe Ludérac and finding it difficult. It was Graham who guessed at the burning excitement that devoured her ancient heart and who interpreted the kindling of her eyes as they rested upon Jill. She had expected to see in his wife, perhaps, a raw, untempered young bohemian; and in Jill she recognized at once a denizen of the world; of the only world she cared about. Her manner became at once less grand and more effusive; even a little too effusive.

She greeted them; she begged them to be seated; and, smiling upon Jill, while her great eyes continued to devour, to appraise and to delight, she said: "I must apologize to you, madame, for the hovel in which you find me. I am very poor, disastrously poor, and I have found what refuge I could."

"But I don't call this a hovel," said Jill, looking thoughtfully at her; she was still occupied with her sense of difficult reconstruction. "I call it rather grand. We live in hotels, usually, and have no real home at all."

"This is a hotel to me. This is not my home. I rent it, merely, from a landlady who is also in summer my housekeeper, and who has just gone away, to Bordeaux, to follow her profession there; otherwise you would find me in a better state for welcoming you." The old lady's eyes, as she spoke, fell on the kitchen bowl and she promptly picked it up and placed it out of sight on the other side of her chair. "I spend my winter quite alone here, but for my *matrre d'hôtel* and an old peasant woman who comes in to care for me."

"This isn't your own setting, then," said Graham, and Madame de Lamouderie's eyes left Jill to dwell on him with a deepened intensity. "I thought it all went with you."

"*Mais non; mais non,*" said the old lady, and it was almost tenderly that she corrected his ingenuous error. "If you knew France better you would recognize in this the setting of the enriched *petite bourgeoisie* as it climbs towards the *haute*. My own home, in childhood, was one of the most princely châteaux of Normandy and for many years, in Paris, my salon was celebrated for its luxury and beauty. I am not even of this province; although, on my father's side, we are related, many centuries ago, to the de la Mothe Fénétons."

"Now I'm very sorry for that"—Graham smiled at the old lady and Jill, looking at them both, felt again a sense of pity; "for I thought that you belonged to that mountain path with the vineyards and the river beneath you and the menacing sky above. Do you remember that you found my landscape menacing? Nothing in Normandy is menacing; and that's what goes with your type, I assure you. I'd have liked to paint you there; or, if not there, then in this room, with the parrot in his cage beside you and your black lace mantilla. But if you disown it all like this it leaves me without my picture."

Jill felt sorrier than ever for Madame de Lamouderie as her great eyes endeavored, almost tragically, to follow the significance of words so unexpected to her.

"Dick is only joking," she assured her. "He'd like to paint you anywhere." And Jill spoke with conviction, for even she could see that the old lady was like a Goya.

"It's quite true!" Graham laughed. "Though I'm not a portrait-painter."

Madame de Lamouderie looked from one to the other. As deeply as she had been disconcerted by the cruel suggestion that she had herself destroyed a possibility so marvelous, so was she now deeply relieved. She looked at Jill with gratitude and she smiled at Graham her half provocative and half supplicating smile. "*Vous êtes charmants tous les deux,*" she assured them. "But who could think of painting an ancient harriard like myself when he has before him a Hebe like the one



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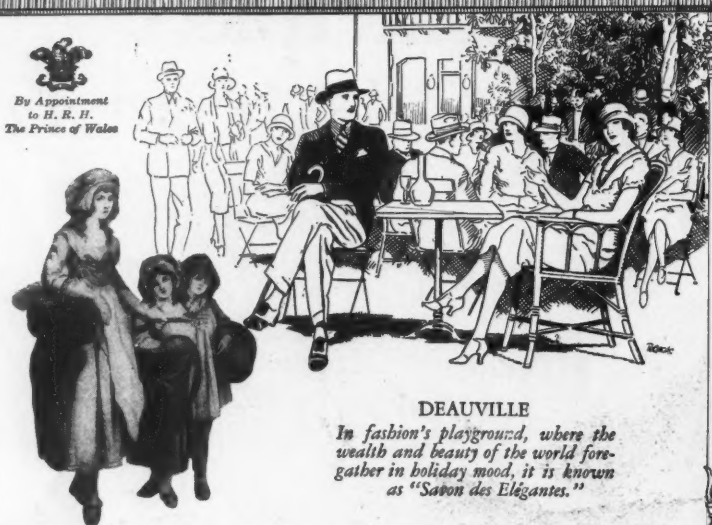


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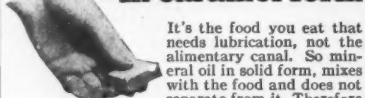
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I see? Madame, you are the true *tête de keepsake* type."

Again Graham dropped his slow "Ha ha." Graham's laugh was a singularly ungregarious affair. It did not take you into his confidence; it excluded you, rather, from all participation with the sources of his mirth. "You don't know what you are talking about," he told the poor old lady. "The *tête de keepsake* has sloping shoulders and ringlets and a rosebud mouth. Jill isn't interesting esthetically; but she's not as bad as a *tête de keepsake*," said the dispassionate husband, while Madame de Lamouderie's attention remained riveted upon him; "Reynolds might have painted her or Romney. But she isn't interesting in design or color; while you are."

Madame de Lamouderie glanced almost timidly at Jill as this preference was announced; but Jill was laughing.

"It's quite true. Artists, real ones, like Dick, never care to paint me. Only one ever did, and that was on a horse, and he did it because of the horse, not because of me; I went well with it. Character is what they like, you know, and I haven't any character."

Joseph at this point appeared with the teatray, very accurately disposed with milk in its jug and a plate of *petits beurres*. The old lady's hands trembled as she poured out the tea and, observing the unexpected viands, the parrot, after watching her for a moment, burst forth with a short refrain, half croaked, half chanted:

*"Quand je bois du vin clair
Tout tourne, tout tourne—au cabaret!"*

"Oh—what a lamb!" cried Jill.

"Ah, he is a very clever bird, very clever indeed; he has said that verse ever since I knew him, and it is only when he sees food," said Madame de Lamouderie, pleased by this appreciation of her pet. "Oui, oui, mon Coco, tu auras du thé. A little biscuit soaked in milk will enchant him."

"Oh, may I give it to him?" said Jill. "He's too attractive. And I do adore animals."

"And so do I," said the old lady, preparing the little sop for Coco, who continued to watch her closely, his head on one side. "So do I. They are my only remaining joy. Here, Madame, give it to him. He will take it so prettily in his claw." And as Madame de Lamouderie handed her the saucer, still with a trembling hand, Jill felt that though she might be rather dreadful—and she felt her rather dreadful—there was something lovable about her.

"But do you mean it? Do you really mean that you would like to paint my portrait?" said the old lady, while Jill fed Coco, scrap by scrap, through the bars of his cage. "In my youth—at a time that you would have found me uninteresting in color and design, monsieur—the greatest artists of Europe disputed the privilege of painting me; but those days are long, long passed."

"I'll come back and paint you in the spring," said Graham.

"Oh—the spring! I shall not last till then."

"Yes; yes, you will; you will last till spring for my sake," said Graham, casting his glance of gloomy mirth upon her; and Jill saw that the poor old creature was bewildered by her felicity.

"But why spring?" she urged. "Why do you go, just when I have found you both? It is our most beautiful season here, this month of October."

"We're going south, worse luck," said Graham. "I had pneumonia last spring and Jill insists that I must have a winter on the Riviera."

"Ah! I envy you. It is a paradise."

"Not to me. I loathe the place. I used to stay there when I was a boy with my mother."

"He means that he doesn't find it interesting in color or design," Jill explained. "This is the country Dick loves to paint."

"And it is in England you live?" asked the old lady. "You are recently married? You have children?"

"Married for five years; and no children," said Jill. Children would not have done at all in her and Dick's life. "We live in England when we live anywhere. Dick has a studio in London and we have three rooms over it. If you call this a hovel, I don't know what you would call our studio. They put the milk on the stair outside our door in the morning."

"But you were not born in a studio with three rooms over it," said the old lady, smiling caressingly upon her. "You were born—shall I tell you? for I see it plainly—in one of your great, beautiful English country-seats with park and deer and village of retainers such as we read of. You have hunted the 'ox; you have been presented at court and danced at great balls with the *noblesse* of your land."

Jill was again laughing. "Well I have danced at a few balls; but the war put an end to most of those for me; and I've been presented at court; and I certainly have hunted the fox—that was a clever guess; there's nothing I love so much. But all the rest is wrong; as wrong as can be." Jill assured her, her jocund eyes upon her. "No park; no deer; no retainers at all. Only a very small, very humdrum country-house: I loved it of course; because it was my home; but it was quite ordinary and humdrum all the same."

"Was? Is it yours no longer?"

"No, my father's dead now and after the war my brother couldn't keep it up and sold it," said Jill in a matter-of-fact tone. "And I haven't hunted for three years, though I do get a mount now and then—when I go back."

"It was I who put an end to it all for her," said Graham. "She'd be living in the country now and hunting and dancing with the *noblesse* if it weren't for me. You have before you an English romance. The beautiful young English heroine who falls in love with the needy painter and follows him to the studio where the milk is put outside on the stair in the morning. It's quite true, you know," and Graham glanced affectionately at Jill as he spoke. "She made as bad a match as possible in marrying me."

The old lady gazed upon them, perplexed and rapturous. "It was a *mariage d'amour*. And you have remained in love for five years. Do you realize that it is a rare feat that you have accomplished?"

"We find it a most normal occupation," smiled Graham. "But to change the subject—which Jill finds rather embarrassing—tell us about this room where you say you don't belong but where you make such a subject for a painter. What sort of people do belong, then? Who put it all together and who lived here?"

"People of no consequence at all," said Madame de Lamouderie, looking about her with a rather grim expression. "A family called, *tout simplement*, Jacquard. A few generations back they were nothing but local peasants and they rose to be traders in Bordeaux."

"But great French marshals began as plebeians sometimes, so I've been told on good authority," Graham reminded her with his smile.

"Ah—so they may have started—but they did not end as *boutiquiers*!" the old lady took up his challenge with equal gaiety. She was living. She was taking in drafts of life deeper than any she had tasted for years. She hugged the happy moment to her breast.

"It doesn't look like the room of what we should call *boutiquiers*."

"Ah, our bourgeoisie gains taste in time—if you call this taste. And the Jacquards did not remain Jacquard undiluted. They married well; too well. It was their ambition that undid them. Impecunious daughters of the *haute bourgeoisie*—of the *petite noblesse*, even—stooped to the alliance, and few families can bear the burden of a succession of dowerless wives. You would not admire this room, *monsieur*," and again a certain vindictiveness came into the old lady's voice, "if you had to spend your winters in it alone."

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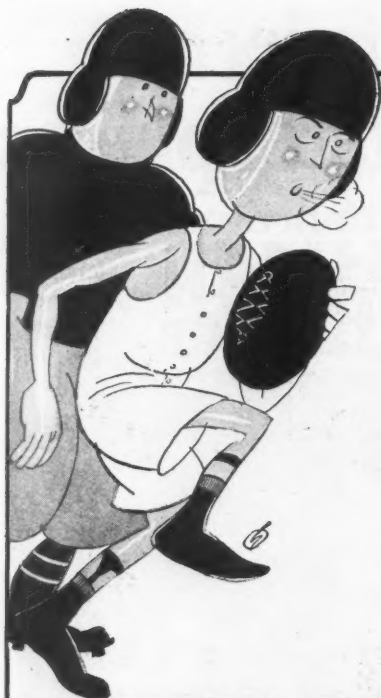
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"I think it's rather horrible, too," said Jill. "It looks like a room that's never breathed. How do you keep warm? It's a northern aspect, isn't it?"

"It is a northern aspect. I do not keep warm. I perish with cold," cried Madame de Lamouderie. "Fortunately—or unfortunately—I am tough; *solide*. It is a miserable existence in the winter. But there are the animals. My landlady is fond of animals, and they are companions for me. A dog; a cat; a hare; all originally unfortunates; wounded, trapped, pursued; she finds them by an unerring instinct; even Coco was dying of a skin disease in a dirty shop in Bordeaux. We have cured him of that and you see how intelligent he is. And I have books—not those—she sends me books from Bordeaux. I devour them; romances, biographies, travels. So the time passes and in the spring she returns. Then it is not so bad. I have somebody to talk to."

"And don't your southern windows look over the garden?" said Jill, always interested in aspects and utilities. "May we see your garden before we go? The door at the end of the hall leads out, doesn't it?"

"Ah, it is nothing, the garden—nothing; but it has the southern aspect, that is true; and our bedrooms look over it; we preferred that to the larger, colder rooms on this side of the house. They are kept closed. They are haunted, I always feel. I never enter them. But must you go?"

"It's getting rather late. I'm afraid we must. You will see us again in the spring." Jill was very sorry for the old lady and something in Graham's detached and smiling demeanor seemed to her a little inhuman. But Dick often struck her as rather inhuman. She determined that he should not be allowed to forget his promise about the portrait.

Madame de Lamouderie rose from her chair and took her stick. But she did not really need a stick, Jill observed. Though so old she was surprisingly upright and she moved forward on her high heels with a beautiful ease and majesty.

She opened the glass door and the sunny stretch of the garden was before them, a straight path running between gnarled fruit-trees from where they stood to a bench placed against the wall at its farthest end. It was melancholy, meditative; yet not unhappy; it was too well tended for that, as Jill's practised eye recognized at once. The ancient trees were pruned; the borders dug; the autumn flowers that grew on either hand looked like the flowers of fifty years ago, but their soil was carefully weeded. Over the high walls was the chestnut forest.

"I should spend all my time in this garden if I lived here!" Jill exclaimed.

Graham stood looking about him, silently now; and something brooding, remote, desolate, even, in his expression struck upon Jill with the sense of mystery that dear, familiar Dick at times roused in her. It was, she thought, as if he were a changeling and heard the distant caroling of a strange ancestry—the fairy-tale, again.

But everything today was fairy-tale and she did not know now whether she could so confidently have told Dick that it was a happy one. There was something very strange in the still, sunny garden; in the still, black form of the old lady, there beside her; in Dick standing a little apart and gazing up the garden path as if he expected to see someone walking down it towards him.

"And here is another pet, you see," said Madame de Lamouderie, pointing with her stick at a large, commodious hutch that stood in the sun against the house. "Our hare; he has lost a leg; but he is quite tame, like Coco, and comes to one's call. Yes; it is not bad, the garden; not bad. But it is too much for one woman and an old man like Joseph."

"Does she work in the garden? Is she young, your landlady?" asked Jill. "I like her for taking care of so many unhappy creatures. I imagined her an old lady."

"Like me?" Madame de Lamouderie leaned on her stick and shook her head, smiling. "No, we are not all old here. Marthe is still young."

"Marthe? Is her name Marthe?"

"Yes; her mother was a Jacquard," said Madame de Lamouderie; "but her name is Marthe Ludérac."

"It must have been her mother, then," said Jill.

They had walked for some time in silence. They had passed the cemetery and were on the descent of the *grande route* among the lower ledges of the chestnut forest, and her mind had all the while been full of Marthe Ludérac.

"Whose mother?" asked Graham.

"The landlady's mother. Her name is the same. Didn't you hear?"

"The same as whose? No; I didn't."

"As the grave's. Of course. That is it. The roses were the same and she's only been gone a few days."

"My dear, what are you talking about?" Graham inquired, roused from his reverie and with a mild exasperation.

"I can't help feeling it all very queer. Didn't you notice—you seemed to notice everything, Dick; I never saw you stare so—on the mantelpiece in that dismal room? They were the same roses, arranged in just the same way, as those on Marthe Ludérac's grave. And just now, when I realized that her landlady was young and asked her name, she said Marthe Ludérac. You must own it's queer."

Dick listened, but rather vaguely. "I can see nothing queer about it. Why shouldn't the daughter put roses on her mother's grave—and on the mantelpiece as well? What of it, Jill?"

"I don't know. I only feel it a little creepy. The grave all alone like that; and the dismal house, and the one-eyed, one-legged animals, and that poor old woman with her princely châteaux and porridge bowl."

At this Graham began to laugh and looked at his wife as he had not looked at her since they had entered the *manoir*. It was as if her preoccupation exorcised his own. He linked his arm in hers. "Go on, Jill. Tell me some more. I like to see your imagination having a run; it runs so seldom—sane creature that you are. Now I've not been seeing people at all. I've been seeing that tranced room—the color of sea-water; those stairs with the high, uncanny window over them; that garden that remembers—and waits—even though it looks as if it had gone to sleep fifty years ago."

"Oh, Dick—you are a treasure!—to see it all like that—and make me see it, too. Yes, of course; I was feeling it all down at the bottom of my mind; only it was all, with me, a background for the people; for Marthe Ludérac and the old lady. You're quite right. It's a *coup de foudre*. She's dreadfully in love with you and I was afraid she was going to cry as she clung to your hand like that just now when we left her. She's afraid she won't see you again, of course; but she shall; she shall," said Jill, fumbling for her cigarettes, since Dick had her by the arm, and getting out her matches.

"You wouldn't mind coming back? I don't know, really, about the old lady; it needs a Goya and a Manet rolled in one to do her with the parrot beside her; but I could go on painting this country for the rest of my life."

"Well, I shouldn't like to spend the rest of my life here, I confess," said Jill. "But I do want you to come back and keep your promise. I want to see Marthe Ludérac, too. And she'll be here in the spring. She's young and sad and kind; rather a wonderful person, I feel. And Madame de Lamouderie feels a little glum about her. I wonder why. Perhaps because of the *noblesse* blood that she doesn't think a Jacquard has a right to. Perhaps it was because of the *noblesse* blood that the mother didn't care to be mixed up with the gravel and the bead wreaths, and moved into the grass—and almost into the forest."

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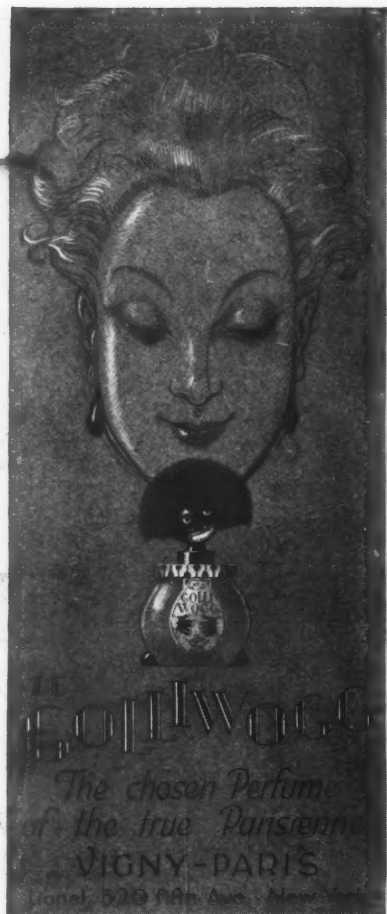
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"Perhaps it was. Pretty good, Jill. But the old lady interested me more than the young one, and she doesn't interest me much except for her looks."

"Oh, you must be kind to her! You mustn't flirt with her and lead her on and then not really care."

"She knows I'm ragging her."

"She's afraid you are but hopes you're not. There's something one does like in her, Dick, in spite of the boasting and flattery; something endearing."

"I don't dislike her. I feel as if I understood her; better than you could ever do, Jill—for I am somewhat devilish myself—while you belong to the angelic category; better than she does herself. If she were twenty I'd probably be in love with her. But she's that kind of woman. She's never existed apart from her sex."

"Do any of us?" Jill mused, ruefully. "Perhaps you wouldn't care about me if I were eighty."

"Yes, I would, Jill. Yes, I would." Graham bent his dark head to smile into her eyes. "That you're a woman lends you charm; but it's incidental. If you were a man you would be my greatest friend. That's the test."

"Your greatest friend. When I don't understand the things you live for? when there's only one side of your life that I touch at all?"

"It's the only side where I need to touch humanity. All I need is someone to rest with and play with and be myself with. You're the perfect comrade; as well as the perfect wife, Jill."

It was sweet to Jill to hear this, and to know how true it was. She had reflected more than once of late that if happy married life consisted in each one going his own way, the trouble with her and Dick was that while he had so very much of a way, she herself had, nowadays, none at all. Her only way was the English country way that Dick, as he had truly said, had taken her from; gardening; games; and hunting.

She thought of hunting now, as she and Dick went down through the chestnut forest and came out upon the river level in the waning evening light. Hounds—darling hounds—and dear horses, and familiar faces that represented not so much individuals but types who did the same things as oneself; and had done so for generations. All the woodland lore; all the crafty knowledge of gate and wall and ditch; all the unvoiced awareness of beauty everywhere, in earth and sky.

It was the only real life, of course, from her point of view, in its cool, cheerful comradeships, its risks and endurances; its ecstasies of flight over wide spaces. The artist's life always seemed to her like a queer make-believe in comparison; like a child's game without basis or consistency.

Not that Dick was like the others. Under the paint and canvases he was the same sort of person that she was; silent; solitary; out-of-doors. But it was funny to spend your life butting your head against a wall, as it were; for to try to capture, to express nature, came to no more than that; did it?

Jill sometimes tried to think it out. Was not nature something transcendent which one entered and partook of? Was not art like trying to dip up the sea in a teacup? A branch of bramble, whitened by hoar frost and glanced at as one waited in the woods on a morning of cub-hunting, seemed to have more in it than all their pictures put together. Once or twice, it was true, in looking at a great picture, Jill had felt herself brushed for a moment by a sense of mystery; by the sense that here indeed something had happened, something been shown to her that, face to face with nature, by herself, she would never have seen. Dick's pictures, strange, queer, even ugly as she found them, had given her that feeling once or twice; especially this last picture he had just finished of the great river and the plains and cliffs seen from the mountain-pass.

But the picture could never give all that

went with the visual experience. So why try? why butt one's head? So Jill came back to it again. And it was amusing to know that where they all felt Dick great and waited expectantly for him to tell them something of his secret, to her his meaning and his worth consisted in being like the branch of bramble.

It was not till after dinner when, for their last evening, they had gone to the balcony to hang above the view and look out over the mysterious spaces of the river to the darkling jut of cliff, that Jill's thoughts again turned to the *manoir* and its occupants.

"Isn't it odious to think of that poor old girl all alone over there, Dick?" she said.

Dick's eyes rested on her. He was not thinking of the old lady. He would never think of her unless she were before him for him to look at. "It's nice of you to be so sorry for her," was what he said.

"If she weren't so horribly alive one wouldn't mind so much. Aren't you sorry for her?"

"I don't suppose I am. I feel it's a law of nature that an old woman like that should perish rather miserably."

"But it makes me sorry to think that a vulture should perish miserably."

"A vulture, perhaps; but not an old woman who's like one. She's never created beauty, or sought truth, or known love; so how can she expect to have anything?"

"You are rather horrible, you know, Dick. Your heart is so hard. Why should you think she's meant nothing more than that? Anyone so alive must have."

"I don't know that. A vulture is very much alive. Her vitality may all have gone to ambition and passion and vanity."

"She's wanted to be loved, of course; who doesn't? And she's wanted to be happy. She's been dreadfully unhappy; one can see it; and disappointed; and ravaged generally. It makes me uncomfortable to think of her—however wrong she's been."

Dick was still looking at her. He had said to Madame de Lamouderie that afternoon that she was not esthetically interesting and Jill had not minded in the least, for she knew how much Dick liked looking at her. She was something quite apart from art, for him; just as he was for her. She was his branch of bramble.

And now, after a moment, he put his hand behind her head and bent it back and kissed her neck and cheek. "I like you very much," he said.

And Jill, leaning against his shoulder, yielded to his caresses, smiled, thinking that it was a happy thing, after five years of marriage, that one's husband should still be one's lover. That was what made it all worth while.

It was in early April that Jill and Richard Graham came back to Buissac. Jill drove the car along the winding valley road, its bordering poplars sharp and silvery against an apple-green sky. Behind them the sunset was apricot-colored; and the cliffs were a cold mauve.

Jill liked to drive and Graham liked to be driven; he said that he could not see anything when he drove.

Dick had hated the Riviera as much as ever and had done no work there at all. In the intervals of tennis and dancing—and no one she had ever met, Jill considered, danced so divinely as Dick—he had sat in solitary, sunny corners above the sea and read metaphysics.

Jill asked him to read aloud to her, when she found him thus, and stared at him with incredulous eyes after a page of "Appearance and Reality."

"Help! Help! Stop!" she cried. "How perfectly blood-curdling! How do you stand it? What's it all about?"

"You have to start young, Jill, to see that," said Dick. He laid his book face downward on his knee to look at her, and put his arm around her shoulders. He didn't care a bit more about her sharing philosophy than he did about her sharing art.

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All he wanted of her was her presence.

"What good does it do you?" asked Jill.

And, laughing, rising, stretching himself, Dick had answered, "God knows! I only hope I may, too, if I go on looking."

Dick was looking for something; that was what it came to. It was because of some inner quest that he had that remote, preoccupied, brooding gaze. How strange it was. Why couldn't people be satisfied with what was here and now?

She had not had to remind him of his promise to Madame de Lamouderie. After his long inaction his thoughts turned spontaneously to the Dordogne country where inspiration needed no seeking. Never, as he had told her, had he seen a country so tuned to his nature, so apt for his expression; and they were coming back to the Ecu d'Or because of all the provincial inns they had stayed at, none had compared with it for economy and excellence.

The Ecu D'Or, as Jill and Graham drove up in the sharp spring evening air, was uproarious with melody and laughter. Some recent fair or festival must so have crowded it, and at the central table a sprawling youth, his soft black hat tipped over his ear, his arm uplifted, entertained his friends with a song. Its nasal terminal *e's* were prodigiously prolonged and its refrain was:

*"Vive, la colline
Nuit d'amour."*

Graham laughed as they heard it. "Irreverent dog! He makes light of national divinities like the *nuît d'amour*! It's good, you know—the roguery of his manner."

Jill's lip curled a little. "One does get fed up with them sometimes," she remarked. And she suddenly realized that she was feeling fed up. It was a new yet an old adventure beginning again, and for once it found her jaded and unresponsive. She did not want to laugh.

Monsieur Michon, pink of jowl and black of eye, was hurrying forward to greet them and Graham handed out the lighter luggage to Amélie, her gaunt face glazed, as usual, with fatigue and perspiration. As usual, Dick refused to allow her to charge herself like a beast of burden with the heavier valises and they made their way up-stairs while Madame Michon, emerging from the kitchen to smile and bow, called up to Amélie that Monsieur et Madame were to have the rooms they had so much appreciated last year.

"C'est bon de vous revoir, madame," she said to Jill. "Vous aimez donc notre petit Buissac," and Jill had to say she did, though feeling that she so little loved tonight the noisy restaurant, Monsieur Michon's affability, or Madame Michon's mole with the crisp black hairs gushing out of it.

While Dick went to put away the car and while Amélie descended to fetch hot water, Jill leaned on her window-sill and looked out over the river. It was strange how she was thinking of England this evening, thinking of its quiet, its decorum, its dulness; and with yearning. How far away it seemed. And what was she to do with herself now? Try to read and understand "Appearance and Reality," perhaps.

Graham had remarked—more than once—that the reason the food was so good at the Ecu D'Or was because they had not attempted baths or even hot water laid on in one's room, and Amélie soon appeared with the two steaming *brocs*.

"How would you like, Jill," Dick asked from his adjoining room, when he had come up and was splashing happily, "to take a little house here—if you're fed up with this place?" Dick was often unaware of one's moods but he never forgot an expressed feeling.

"Oh—it's not the Ecu D'Or I mind," said Jill, getting out her little black *crêpe de Chine* dress. It was a delightful garment and had served her well for a year. One turn and it was over your head, and one tie and it was adjusted. She slipped on her pearls, for Dick

liked to see her in them. "It's France itself, sometimes, you know. We are such strangers here; and if we lived here for a hundred years we'd be strangers just the same. I suppose the place is still full of starving cats."

"Let us hope that most of them have died during the winter," said Dick cheerfully. "People are much nearer the bare bones of existence here than with us. They're starved themselves, as I think I've said before."

"Monsieur Michon isn't starved; or Madame either. It's a country of fat men and thin animals," said Jill bitterly.

"The Michons aren't *peuple*. You don't see many fat peasants. I like it, you know. I like the bare bones; the sense of having got away from smugness and civilization. A place like this is still essentially medieval."

Monsieur Michon, in the stuffy little dining-room that smelled of garlic and sour wine, was waiting to serve them himself and, as usual, the dinner was excellent. Monsieur Michon hovered near while they ate.

"Do you know whether Madame de Lamouderie is well?" Jill asked towards the end of the repast, feeling that Monsieur Michon might find her silence unsympathetic. And she felt better, now that she had had her dinner.

"Ah, la vieille dame. I have not seen her all winter," said Monsieur Michon, standing beside them ready for conversation over the pastry and wine. "She is there, I know; but she never comes down into the village. Only Monsieur Trumier, Madame Blondel, at the *mercerie*, is Monsieur Trumier's niece, and he often comes to see her and her children. But the old lady, no. It has been a cold winter. She will have found it long. But now that Mademoiselle Ludérac has returned it will go better with her."

As she heard the name it seemed to Jill that she remembered something long forgotten; that she reentered the sense of expectancy, of fairy-tale; sad or happy. She saw the solitary grave under the chestnut branches; the pale, sad room at the *manoir*, and the fading autumn roses.

"Does Mademoiselle Ludérac come down often?" she asked.

"She comes sometimes; yes; she comes. She is a very eccentric young lady," said Monsieur Michon dispassionately.

"In what way eccentric?" It was Jill who questioned.

"She cares nothing—but nothing at all for humans, but has a mania for animals," smiled Monsieur Michon. "Did Madame not see many old useless animals up at the *manoir*? She finds them; she collects them—*Dieu sait comment*. They seem to know by instinct when she goes by. I have seen her pass with a mangy dog in her arms, a dirty old dog, full of vermin, who crawled out from a heap of refuse down by the river when she looked over the wall one day. He had been thrown down there to die, no doubt; and better to have left him. But no. She carried him up to the *manoir* and tended him and fed him, we may suppose, and Monsieur Trumier shot him to make a good end of the story. She does not carry her mania so far as to keep them all alive. When they are too old and ill, they are shot; dogs, cats, goats, what you will; we heard of a sheep one day. It is a strange occupation for a young lady."

"I don't think it strange at all," said Jill, but she was too much absorbed by what Monsieur Michon had told to speak indignantly; her eyes dwelt on him. "I think it only too natural; for there are a great many unhappy animals in Buissac."

"Ah, madame, there are unhappy people, and animals, everywhere," said Monsieur Michon with a touch of dryness. "For my part I think it more natural to devote oneself to one's own kind. The beasts do not feel as we do. And they are there for our use and convenience."

Jill was now aware of indignation. "They are only there like that because we are stronger than they are. They have just as much right to live as we have—more right than a lot of us!"

she exclaimed, while Graham, peeling an orange for her, listened with a smile.

"Well, Madame would then agree with Mademoiselle Ludérac," said Monsieur Michon; and, a further memory coming, he laughed a little. "She is a very eccentric young lady. She struck Monsieur le Curé one day!"

"Struck him?" It was Graham who questioned, his face lighted by amusement. "What for?"

"It was during a dispute over an animal—*bien entendu*. Monsieur le Curé is irascible—and Mademoiselle Ludérac is not a favorite of his. It was his cat she had found; his own cat; very thin; soon to be a mother. and it had followed her crying. When Monsieur le Curé met her, carrying it up to the *manoir*, he was very angry. They came to bitter words. He tried, I believe, to take the cat from her. She resisted. Finally it was blows. All the village saw, though I, unfortunately, was absent on that day. But I had it all from Madame Michon.

"The cat escaped in the scuffle and was never seen again; but Monsieur le Curé always affirms that she managed to find it and to conceal—or kill it—up at the *manoir*. He said that he had never possessed such a mouser."

"I hate their killing mice!" Jill exclaimed "I'm so glad it escaped. I'm glad she struck the *curé*, too."

And, laughing again, with a bow for a charming lady's extravagance, Monsieur Michon hearing a client call in the restaurant below, left them.

"How perfectly glorious!" Jill exclaimed. Her mood of apathy was gone. "She struck him! Oh, I do hope she found the poor thing afterwards. It puts a new heart into one to hear anything like that. The starving cats of Buissac have a patron saint."

"A warrior saint. Yes. She sounds a terrifying young person," said Graham, still laughing and handing Jill her cleverly separated orange. "Though I'm glad, too, that she struck the *curé*. I remember him. A fat old scoundrel. But I'm afraid your heroine is a little *détraquée*, Jill. Monsieur Michon evidently thinks so."

"Monsieur Michon would think Joan of Arc *détraquée*. I can't bear Monsieur Michon. . . . Poor, poor little creature! Soon to be a mother!" said Jill, thinking of their cherished family cat at home and her tenderly supervised *accouchements*.

"My dear Jill, life isn't long enough—we're not strong enough to begin to think of all the cats."

"Never mind. I'll think about Mademoiselle Ludérac's cats. And I shall go up to see her tomorrow," said Jill.

When the next afternoon came it brought a chill spring rain and as Jill in her rain-coat started for the *manoir*, Graham joined her. It was too wet for painting.

At the kitchen door Jill paused to ask Madame Michon if the only way to the *manoir* went past the cemetery. "I seem to remember a little path running down from the woods."

"Madame has a good memory," said Madame Michon, drying her arms as she came forward from dish-washing. "There is another way, but it is a rough climb. At the end of the village, where the road turns up the mountain, you will see a causeway built out from it to what we call the island." Madame Michon came with them to the door as she spoke and pointed towards the foot of the promontory. "It is indeed an island, for the water goes round it, but when you come to it you will see that it belongs to the mainland, too, for there is a long stretch of pasture between it and the cliff where the people graze their cattle and grow their hay. It is the finest meadow in the commune. Sometimes it is very wet on the lower ground but we have had dry weather of late and though it rains now I think that Monsieur and Madame



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will find it comfortable for walking. You will find a bridge crossing the stream that flows between the meadow-land and the cliff and from there you quickly climb to the *grande route*. You cross the road—there are openings in the walls to let the path run through; and in five or ten minutes more you are among the vineyards."

"And who uses the path? The *manoir* people?" Jill asked.

"No. Monsieur Trumier brings down the grapes, at the vintage, by the road. The path is used only by some poor folk who live in a cottage near the *manoir* and graze their goats and sheep down on the meadow. It is indeed fit only for goats and Madame and Monsieur would do better to keep to the road."

"I like the idea of the little path. And I don't like cemeteries," said Jill.

The peninsula, they found, had been built into a breakwater, half natural, half artificial. It was broad enough to allow of the passage of a hay cart and sloped down to the rich alluvial meadow that must once have been the river bed. Two arms of the river still flowed through the meadow, dividing it on one side from the island, whose rocky outer shores continued the breakwater, and on the other from the cliff.

Jill paused to look at the sluices which regulated the currents.

"You see, it can all be irrigated in dry weather," she said, her country eye gratified by the promise of admirable crops. "And this dyke is so high that I shouldn't think any flood could ever go over it. How clever."

"All as well arranged as the cemetery, isn't it?" said Graham.

"Just as well. And it does them more credit. What a splendid meadow it gives them! They are keeping the grazing on the island, you see. There are our cows."

"I like the island; but I don't like the meadow," said Graham. "The cliff looks like a tidal wave above it."

"But it's all so nice; so happy," said Jill. "Where's the bridge, I wonder?" They had descended to the meadow and were walking now around the great projection of the promontory that indeed towered rather menacingly above them. "It goes on and on. It seems to go for miles. And the island runs with it all the way."

"I don't see any goats," said Graham.

But where they had rounded the promontory and Buissac was lost to sight, they came to the bridge, a mere plank and hand-rail laid across the inner stream, and saw that the meadow ran at last into the river half a mile farther on. They crossed the stream and began the steep ascent. It was a bare cliff-side they climbed until the *grande route* was reached. And there they stopped to rest and look down on the view. The rain fell, steadily, finely; but the scents and sounds of spring were in the air and, above, the vineyards were breaking into bud.

"We might hear a willow-warbler on a day like this," said Jill. "I really believe the warblers are safe in France; they are too small to be noticed, so they're not made into a *friture*. Oh, those horrible *pâtés d'alouettes* at the hotel in Cannes!"

"People in England eat larks, too."

"Yes. But they have the grace to know they are doing a disgusting thing while they eat them!" Jill returned.

The path, when they resumed their climb, led through vineyards to the *manoir* road and in a moment more they found themselves again before the *manoir* wall. They could see the high roof and green-stained walls above it.

"It's happier now than when the leaves are out to hide it," said Jill.

"All the same, it's an uncanny place," said Graham. "Was ever anything so still? 'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came.' You're like Childe Roland, Jill."

"Well, I'll blow my horn, then," said Jill. She had read 'Childe Roland' at school and she had liked it. She put her hand to the door in the wall and pushed it open; but the bell

did not clang above their heads. It still hung there, they saw; but the chain or string must be broken, so that it was in silence that they approached up the mossy path.

"What a pity we're too late for the snowdrops," Jill whispered. "They've been everywhere."

As they stood at the door debating whether to knock or ring—"I'll bet you the bell doesn't sound here, either," said Jill—a young woman came in the rain round the corner of the house. She wore a black mackintosh, and one hand held a black knitted shawl under her chin; the other carried an earthenware dish. She had a pale face and dark eyes and she stopped short on seeing them and stood looking at them for a moment, as an animal stops to look when confronted by an unexpected object.

There was something in her gaze that made Jill think of an animal, it was so gentle, grave and unconscious, and after the pause of contemplation she turned and disappeared as she had come.

"Can it be Mademoiselle Ludérac?" Jill whispered.

Graham did not reply at once. He was looking at the place where the young woman had been. "I don't think so," he then said. "It looked like a peasant woman." He had a curiously perplexed expression and it was curious to hear him say "it" as if speaking of an animal; an unknown, beautiful animal that had crossed their path.

"I think we'd better knock," said Jill, after they had stood in silence for another moment.

"What about going back?" said Dick, turning his eyes upon her, still with the curious look; though he smiled.

"Going back?"

"Yes. What if Childe Roland didn't blow the horn?"

"But, Dick!" Jill tried to laugh, not quite succeeding. "Are you frightened?"

"Perhaps I am. Or perhaps I'm superstitious."

"Do you think it was a ghost?" smiled Jill, and her own lips felt a little queer.

"Well, it may have been, you know." Graham had Highland blood and it had played him, Jill knew, a trick or two before this.

She would not tolerate the mood. "Well, we'll face it, then," she said and she lifted her hand with determination to the knocker.

But before she had sounded it, the door swung open. It seemed, as if her words had been a spell, to have opened of itself, and Jill's calm English blood gave an unpleasant turn. Then she saw that behind the door was Joseph.

"*Entrez, messieurs et dames*," he said.

"But we did not ring! We did not knock! How did you know?" said Jill. In spite of Joseph her blood was not quite comfortable; he was not reassuring, somehow; older, more derelict, more disintegrated than ever. But she now saw that he wore a peasant's blouse and had on sabots clogged with mud.

"Mademoiselle saw Monsieur and Madame and told me to open," said Joseph in his flat, impartial tones.

The explanation, when given, was self-evident. Jill and Graham stripped off their wet coats and Joseph ushered them into the salon.

There, beside a wood-fire that burned brightly, sat the old lady in her *bergère*; fast asleep. Joseph did not announce them to his unconscious mistress. He glanced at her cursorily and muttering, "*Mademoiselle rentrera tout à l'heure*," closed the door and left them.

"Poor old thing; how she'll hate being caught like this!" Jill whispered. "Shall we sit down and wait?"

"*Tout à l'heure* is non-committal. It's not nearly tea-time yet," said Graham. He glanced around him as he spoke; uneasily. "I'll wake her, I think. It would startle her to wake and find us sitting here looking at her. She'd feel as if we were ghosts." And

still he paused and still he looked around him.

"Is that a harp? It wasn't here last autumn." The tall object, standing in its green baize case at the farther end of the room, was certainly a harp.

"Who plays it, I wonder?" said Jill. "No; it wasn't here. Can it be Mademoiselle Ludérac's?"

"I don't like it—whoever plays it," said Graham. "And there's still time to go back, Jill. We could ask Joseph not to tell the old lady, and she'd never be the wiser."

"But, Dick—leave Buissac! How too nonsensical you are! And it's not only her; we've come to see Mademoiselle Ludérac as well."

"I haven't come to see her," said Graham. "But very well; since you'll have it so." He went forward and laid his hand gently on Madame de Lamouderie's shoulder.

She raised her head, opened her eyes and looked up at him; fixedly; quietly. She wore no paint, nor any lace on her white hair. She was beautiful, Jill thought, watching her awaken under Graham's touch. There was something innocent, even lovely, in her look. "*Que me voulez-vous?*" she said in a tranced voice.

"A cup of tea," smiled Graham. "And a promise that I shall paint you as the Sleeping Beauty."

The old lady still sat leaning back in her chair, motionless; gazing at him. "Everything you wish—everything you wish," she murmured. "How have you found me? I have waited long for you."

"Clever princes always find their princesses," said Graham. He found the graceful words, but he was troubled and cast a questioning glance on Jill, standing behind him.

She came forward to his rescue. "It's spring, and we've come back, as we said we should," she told the old lady, whose eyes, still tranquil from their dream, turned on her. "Don't you remember Richard and Gillian Graham?"

The old lady looked at her with a sort of astonishment. Then she struggled suddenly to her feet. "*Dieu—Dieu—Dieu!*" she uttered. "Non! It is not possible!" She seized Jill's outstretched hands. "You have come back! and I did not think that I should ever see you again. It seems to me that decades have passed since you were last here—as if you came to me from far, far away; from my youth. *Mais asseyez vous donc; asseyez vous; que je vous regarde bien.*"

They could see, when they had taken the chairs, one on either side of her, that her trembling hand indicated, that the poor old lady had not worn well. She looked very much older than they remembered her as looking and had something of the dreadful aspect of a waxen image galvanized suddenly to precarious life. But as they talked to her, and told her that they were to stay in Buissac for weeks—perhaps for months—the banked fires crept forth again; the smiles came, arch, provocative; the light of hope, of zest, of avidity, flickered in her great black eyes. They could note, too, that though taken unaware and somewhat disheveled by her siesta, she was yet much neater and fresher than in the autumn. Her hair was carefully dressed on the top of her head; the black lace fichu at her neck was carefully knotted and a very clean handkerchief lay on the small table, with a bowl of violets beside it.

"Ah, it is too good to be believed! I can hardly understand it yet," she said. "That you have come; that you are to stay; that I am to see you with peace and quietness of heart."

"Where's the parrot?" asked Graham. "He is to go into the portrait, you know."

"The portrait? Do you really mean to paint my portrait?"

"I've come back to Buissac to paint it."

The old lady's happiness seemed to have infected Graham and to have dispelled his clouds and, again, as she saw him smile upon her and saw her smile of adoration answer him,

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Jill felt the stir of trouble, of pity. It was almost as if Dick were a resplendent careless sun god and the old lady a hapless, rapturous Semele doomed to be shriveled by such rays. "But Coco is dead," she told him. "Can you paint me without Coco?"

"Dead? But parrots never die."
"Ah, Coco died, however. Yes. It is too true. And of old age, I fear; like the rest of us. Joseph found him lying on the floor of his cage one morning; cold and stiff. So it will be with me before so long."

"Nonsense. You're not going to die in your cage," Graham reminded her. "You are going to die on a mountain pass, on an autumn morning, with the vineyards below you and the menacing French sky above."

Madame de Lamouderie's eyes lighted with the ecstatic recollection. "You have not forgotten! Nor I! Nor I! Not one word of our meeting have I forgotten. Ah, madame, your husband is a remarkable man; you will not deny that, I know. One has only to glance at him and one sees genius on his brow."

"A menacing sky? Ah, it is you who are menacing—you and your work. If the sky looked to me in nature as it does on your canvas, I do not know that I should care to die under it. How should I face such a sky, when I cannot face my *curé*!"

"No; I do not face 'im, I am such a sinner. Once a year the poor man climbs up to hear my confession (for I tell him that I am too old to go to his church—and that is a falsehood, to begin with; but a confessional fills me with dismay); and I tell him to place himself on a chair—so; while I sit here—so; my back to him. And then I recite to him all my enormities; such enormities as an ancient caged old woman can commit; lies; gluttony; evil tempers; envy; malice—what you will. And while I tell, I see the poor *curé* stealing glances round over his shoulder at me—to be sure that he has heard aright. A fat red man with a hand on each knee. Sometimes," said the old lady, frown with the evident success of her recital, "I tell him sins I have not committed to see what he will do."

"Was that the same *curé* that Mademoiselle Ludérac struck?" asked Jill, when they had done laughing.

Madame de Lamouderie's triumphant smile vanished and she looked at her, arrested. "Mademoiselle Ludérac? You know her? She has already spoken with you?"

"We don't know her at all. We were only told how fond she was of animals—you told us that, too; and how she tried to save the *curé*'s cat."

The old lady still looked disconcerted as though the mention of her landlady's name had thrown cold water on her high spirits. "They are not friends—not friends at all, Marthe and the *curé*. But it is not fair to say she struck him. Marthe is very gentle. She hurt the cat in trying to get it from her and it was only then that she raised her hand against him." And suddenly the old lady laughed. "I should have liked to see his face!"

"And aren't we to see her? Aren't we to make her acquaintance today?" Jill asked. "I love animals, too; and I feel I should like Mademoiselle Ludérac."

The old lady gazed at her, sobered once more, and Jill realized that her expression was like nothing so much as that of a child who has been asked to share a box of chocolates with a companion. She and Dick were the old lady's very own box of chocolates and she could not bear that Mademoiselle Ludérac should have a morsel.

"But yes, certainly; of course you will make her acquaintance—since you will so often make me glad by coming here," she said slowly. "But today she will not, I know, be

persuaded to come in. She is not at all accustomed to the world. She is very *farouche*; very *sauvage*—how do you say, very shy and timid indeed," said the old lady, helping herself out with the English words. "And she would not interest you, madame, oh, not in any way. She is a simple country girl; a simple, good little bourgeoisie. She does not know of any of the things that interest *gens du monde*, like ourselves. She does not know the world at all."

"But I have heaps of friends who are not *gens du monde*," said Jill, looking at the old lady with the thoughtfulness that was, as far as she was concerned, her nearest approach to displeasure. "In fact I don't think I know many *gens du monde* at all—except Dick's mother," and Jill cast a glance of shared amusement upon her husband. "She's very, very *du monde*; more than we always care for— isn't she, Dick?"

"Far more," said Graham tersely.

"And if Mademoiselle Ludérac is timid she'll have to get used to us," Jill went on, while the old lady's eyes turned with their manifest anxiety from one to the other. "Since we'll probably be here all spring, she'll have plenty of time. Perhaps she'll take me for some walks, in the mornings, while Dick paints you."

The arrest in the old lady that followed these words was even more pronounced than the first had been, but Jill soon saw that it was relief and not dismay that they effected. "But she will be honored—charmed indeed, if you will indeed bear with her. It will not interest you to go with her often—that I must warn you; but once or twice; for her to show you some of our little known *points de vue*; yes; that will indeed be a treat for the excellent Marthe. But the mornings?"—again anxiety clouded her face. "It is in the mornings that she has all her work, here in the house, to do. She rarely gets out in the morning—unless it is into the garden or *basse-cour*. And I myself am a late riser. Must the portrait be for the morning?"

"I'd rather come in the afternoon," Graham assured her. "And it will only be on rainy days, for I have my landscapes to think of in fine weather." And Jill, seeing relief dawn again on the strained old face, smiled inwardly, thinking: "Yes; never fear, you poor old thing; you shall have him all to yourself."

Joseph, at this point, tidied up, in his felt slippers and white tie, appeared with the tray, and as he set it down on the center table it revealed the influence of a superior and supervising hand. It was laid with a fine white cloth and besides the biscuits there was a plate of small fresh pastries upon which the old lady's eye fastened with a glad avidity.

"Ah! Marthe has been baking! Here is indeed a treat for us!" she exclaimed.

And then Joseph, standing at the door with his weary impartiality of demeanor, announced, before leaving: "Mademoiselle begs to be excused from attendance at tea. She is very much occupied this afternoon."

"Bien. Bien, Joseph. C'est bien," the old lady repeated, dismissing the unnecessary information as quickly as possible. And pouring out their tea, she began, with her released and happy volubility, to tell them again about herself; about her salon in Paris; her sons, who had been *garçons charmants*, but "*très, très dissipés*"; her one remaining child; a princess; a Russian princess, who had had to flee before the Bolsheviks to a refuge offered by a relative in South America. "I shall never see her again, never," she declared, with little sign of affliction. "And when we meet it is not always happy. No; she is like her father; she has a violent temper and is *d'un égoïsme effrayant*. I am alone in the world; quite alone. And no one cares whether I live or die."

The quality of strangeness is indeed Marthe Ludérac's when Graham and Jill come to know her—and she throws over Graham that curious spell which is to change his life—in the Next Instalment of Anne Douglas Sedgwick's novel

The Right Honorable the Strawberries

(Continued from page 39)

long. When we started in to match, I said I'd take a look at his coin. He looked at me. 'Certainly,' he says, with six inches of ice on his voice; and his face got redder than his sunburn. Nothin' was wrong with the coin. 'And now,' he says, takin' another look at me, 'I'll not ask to see yours.' Funny how he made those harmless words sound, but say, how can you hit a person that's only got his underwear on? He's an adult, all right. Oh, it'll be won back off him. I guess he'll not require to be called. The cockroaches will look him up this evenin'."

I wondered a little at his way of putting it—"It'll be won." Why not say right out, "I'll win it"? If you're a professional gambler, why be sensitive?

"Dinnes ledly!" again shrieked the odd Mongolian voice.

"All right, Madden," called the landlord. "But if your friend stays among us, this lonesome country will not miss the circus to speak of."

Madden on certain nights scattered in his kitchen a powder which drove up into the bedroom above it swarms of those rushing insects that haunt sinks. When this occurred, nobody could remain long in a dreamless sleep. We should have our first circus in a few hours. To think of this cheered me throughout dinner in spite of my sullen neighbor, whose very silence was disagreeable. He was a gambler from Powder River, and he too used to win the poor Chinaman's wages. Madden's hand shook as he served him.

Yes, it was my turn to see, instead of to be, the circus. Entertainment for this lonesome country would now be furnished by another—unless he should modify himself, which Englishmen seldom do; they merely wonder why you don't. Why was he here, remote from the feudal centuries which had produced him so flawless, with his confiding smile, his wary wits, his merry blue eye, his poise, his flaxen hair, his leap at the sight of a bird to shoot, that flash of skill with a gun which there and then had won the heart of Chalkey in spite of any outlandish fashion in speech or dress? Flawless? Or was there a flaw at which they had drawn the line? I hoped that the Doughgy was wrong—and I looked forward to the circus.

After supper, when the night's gambling had begun, my suspense increased. I played poker for a while, as usual a loser, and the man from Powder River did not grow more agreeable over the cards. I had a sense of something in the wind outside my understanding. I left the game and sat in the office by the big table, idly reading the stale newspapers strewn upon it, waiting for the cockroaches.

At length a very marked disturbance was set up above, and to my delight I heard a voice say clearly: "Why, damn it, look at that! Oh, I say, just look at that!"

The Englishman came down-stairs. He was barefoot, clad scantily in a garment or two, with the bedquilt clutched round him. He came without haste, candid, cheerful, self-possessed beneath his rumpled tangle of yellow hair.

"Oh, there you are! No ladies present, I hope? One couldn't stop up there, you know. Myriads of active creatures streaking and twinkling. A creature got in my ear and banished sleep, and I felt others hastening over me; so I lighted a lamp, and saw them rushing. Walls—pillow—myriads—they ran out of my trousers and into my boots. One positively can't stop up there."

"I couldn't," I told him; at which his blue eyes fixed me with sudden attention. "I didn't," I pursued. "I slept on this table."

"Oh. Really. Oh. Yes. One of those characteristic things! Well, it's a peerless success. But I hope that whatever others are in store will



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be more subtle. Where's the landlord? Would he mind if I slept on the table?" He went to the open door of the saloon. "Landlord, it's a peerless success. Would you mind if I slept on the table?"

"Sleep where it suits you, kid. But now you're awake, what's the matter with a little poker?"

"Oh, thanks so very much, no, I'm too much of a kid, if you don't mind. I'll just coil up on the table."

The special vibrations in his utterance of "kid" went home to the ears of the gamblers, a light sound of laughter at the landlord's expense rose and died.

In his quilt, the barefoot boy stood motionless, watching the dingy, dangerous group at their game. His hair and his slim, erect form were touched by the light of a lamp near him; a high lamp in the saloon shone down upon the players and their cards. Other lamps struck gleams from the thick glasses along the bar, gleams from the bottles stacked above it, and the pictures of pink women and prize-fighters flanking the bottles made patches of light on the wall. Big hats hung on nails, and their owners sat at various tables in boots and spurs and flannel shirts and leather chaps, their heads unbrushed, their necks dark and seamed, their hands knotted, scarred, their pistols visible.

He hung so long upon the scene that I thought he might be going to change his mind and join them in the name of the characteristic, but in time he turned away. Was it some trick of light and shadow? His face seemed to look as it might when he should be fifty; not because of any wrinkles, but from whatever spiritual demolition it is that age sometimes wreaks on the human countenance. It must have been a trick of the lamp; as he came forward, he was merely the serene boy that had stalked down from the cockroaches fifteen minutes ago; and with his words, his confiding smile shone out again.

"I say! Simply rippin'! John Sargent ought to paint your friends. It would make a pair with his Spanish den of melody and sudden death one saw in Paris. But that Chinaman should keep out of it. What chance has he got in there?"

John Sargent was not yet even a name to me, and I asked no questions as the boy went on.

"Well, now for your landlord's ample hospitality on this jolly old table. I could do with a little more bedding."

He glanced alertly about the office; dragged a saddle from a corner, threw over it the saddle-blanket, stiff and odorous with sweat, and so contrived himself a pillow; he mashed and shaped the stale newspapers into a wad between his bones and the table, got up on it, and was curling himself with his back to the light when a crash in the next room, and voices of violence, and shots, brought him up sitting.

"Get down!" I said to him; and I ran out of range and crouched.

He sat on his table, gazing with an interested expression at the saloon.

"Get down! You'll be killed!" I shouted from my shelter.

He did not turn his head.

The crashes and the scuffling of boots had ceased, and only the shots rang. The duel came through the door into the office: first, the sullen man who had been at dinner, backing, aiming, firing, and so step by step to the front door. Standing a moment there, he shot, his arm swung wild and limp, he slanted backward, grabbing at the jamb, lurched and fell outward, and lay so, his boots with his spurs and long heels sticking stiffly into the room.

Gripping a peg by the door of the saloon, the landlord leaned for support, fired twice more, coughed horribly and pitched forward flat on his face as his pistol bumped a few feet across the floor. Smoke floated thick in the room, its smell bit my throat like a file, and through it I saw the boy, seated on his table still. Faces from various sides began cautiously to peep and peer. The boy moved, got down

slowly, and slowly walked to the saloon door, and slowly stooped down.

"He's dead," I heard him say, almost under his breath; and I found that I was still crouching in my corner. I rose, and he noticed me. "So they meant it," he said quietly.

The peeping faces had now made sure that this affair was over, and the emptied premises were crowded for a while with neighbors who had left whatever they were doing to gather details of the incident. So it was those two! Then what was behind it? A split between partners? Or had it come up over the landlord's woman? Well, others were ready to fill the vacant situation. Maybe she'd take Jack Saunders now. Well, neither party would be missed.

And amid such dispassionate comment, both parties were lifted and carried somewhere, while Madden appeared with a bucket, and after splashing hot water on the floor, went on his knees to scrub it with true Chinese diligence. Before he was done, all neighbors had gone back to their own business, and there were the boy and I alone in the office. Neither of us had spoken while the crowd was talking, and none had spoken to us, or noticed us particularly.

"Do they always take this sort of thing as a matter of course?" he now inquired.

"I suppose so. It's my first experience."

"I say. When you told me to hook it, you know. I believed everybody was ragging for my special edification."

I smiled, and he smiled a little, too.

"I say. What would be your idea as to a good big drink?"

"So be it. On me."

"No, no. One isn't destitute. Come upstairs."

There I shared his whisky, and he shared my room. Safe from cockroaches. Destitute! An odd word.

Next day the two parties went to inhabit the graveyard, and their places in Drybone were filled by the living. Sun-ry horsemen ambled casually into town through this forenoon on various pretexts. Every one of them was to be seen at some time or other stooping over the hotel register, and I wondered if the boy noticed that each, before ambling out, somehow had a word or two with him.

Tom King, foreman of the V R outfit, returned to Deer Creek, disappointed not to have identified the Englishman he had once seen at O'Neil City, Texas, dealing faro; through that day and the next, others who had met here and there similar nomads of disgrace, ambled in: the lonesome country entertained itself with no circus but with many guesses behind his back. The word he dropped out of silence the second afternoon as he smoked his pipe perhaps gave a clue to his thoughts.

"Can they always find so much spare time?"

His tone may have been a trifle lighter than common, perhaps something like a shadow was present in his eyes; I couldn't be sure, as he smoked on for a while. Destitute?

"Will Chalkey be coming along again?" he presently asked.

"Probably for the mail, and certainly as soon as he has money to spend."

"I like Chalkey."

He did not like the hotel, or its new proprietor gambler, Jack Saunders. This personage had exacted and promptly received a cash deposit, when the boy took steps to find a habitation of his own. He chose what remained of the old adjutant's office, out of which one good room could still be made.

"Aiming to take out naturalization papers?" Saunders inquired.

"Now there's an idea!" retorted the boy pleasantly. "To become your fellow subject one almost would."

"Citizens live here."

"Quite! I beg their eighty million pardons."

With narrowed eyes, Saunders stood for a moment, then went about his business, and the boy made some purchases for housekeeping.

"How do you swallow the filth they give you for coffee?" he asked me. "One could learn to

cook as well as to rope. If ever my things do come, you'll see my room won't be half bad."

They came the following week, and his first mail came, many letters, forwarded to Cheyenne first and thence here, with a black-edged one among them. Passengers were in the office, bound north, and punchers had gathered for their mail. These watched him tear open the black-edged letter first, and after a glance, forget his surroundings. He seemed to read it twice, and stood then, holding it absently, and spoke, not to us, but to space.

"Well, I shall miss old John."

In the silence, some boot scraped on the floor. Perhaps they were hoping for a circus.

He read the bad news again. "Only a week. And then—gone."

Among the forgotten audience, the face of Chalkey penetrated his trance.

"John was such a jolly old sot," he confided to Chalkey, as if the two were alone.

"There's some here," said the puncher awkwardly, "that could fill his place that way for you."

The boy did not seem to hear him.

"Of course, one wasn't going to see John again very soon, but—well, of course that's one life less between me and the strawberry leaves," he finished in a tone abruptly matter-of-fact.

Stupefaction deepened the noiselessness.

"Us Americans," said Jack Saunders, intentionally ungrammatical, "ain't never studied your foreign fruits. Was John climbin' the tree for them strawberries when he fell?"

A dark flush instantly spread over Chalkey's face, while the boy looked somewhat long, but very amiably, at Saunders before he answered.

"Oh," he said in his lightest tone, and as if from a distance, "John was my brother, you see."

If this was a circus, it was not he that furnished it. The stage was ready, its passengers left for the north, most of the cow-punchers rode away, and anyone who had come in now to join the few of us that remained, could not have read in the boy's recovered aspect anything of the shock which had been for a brief space too much for him.

Chalkey failed to suppress his customary thirst for information.

"About the strawberry leaves. Would you object to telling some more? Don't, if you do."

"Very glad to. One forgets. If you Americans only spoke a language entirely your own, it wouldn't be so baffling. You're so absurdly like us at odd moments, and so inconceivably not at others—you've not, for instance, inherited certain ancient—suppose we say habits? Such as the eldest son. Call it a bad habit if you like, but there it is!—and you were a bit slow in getting rid of your own bad habit of slavery, weren't you? Now I'm rather fond of our ancient habits, and yet I've always been a younger son."

"But you're not now that—that—he's gone?"

"John? Oh, yes, I am." Here he turned to me and forgot the cow-punchers, speaking to me as if we were alone. "John was next above me, and such a dear fellow. We hunted pleasures in couples through the London night. Happy times! The Criterion after the theaters, and all that, you know. I couldn't carry my wine like John, but I shouldn't ever in my most careless moments ever have brought a poll to our house in Portman Square. I never saw the pater so waxy. That simply isn't done, you know. Granville's next above John. Bowls, and not bad at the wicket. Chandos is next above Granville. He got a blue. He's secretary to Lord Lyons, at our embassy in Paris. Wymford's rather political—makes speeches and all that. Of course, Wymford isn't his own father. What's the matter?" he asked, for Chalkey had raised a pleading hand.

"We're beginners," said the puncher.

"You'll have to make the strawberries easier."

"Oh. Wymford is the eldest son's title in

our family. He'll drop it when he succeeds. One's parents," he continued to me, again leaving the rest out, "were absurdly prolific. If he had met us, Wordsworth would never have stopped his poem at seven, because I'm the eleventh and last, and he could have so readily changed the meter. Wymford—his name is Charles—was the first-born. His title came into the family—but I'll skip that—he'll have the strawberry leaves when he succeeds the pater. If he were to die, my brother Ronald, the next son, would have them. I don't want to bore you," he said to the others.

"You don't. Go on, Prince."

"Not even baronet! Well. How to simplify? How to sketch? Well, it's like this."

They attended closely to his brief account of titles, coronets, emblems, the general scheme of the British peerage.

"I suppose it all sounds awfully odd to you. But it's rather natural to us."

"Is it nine," asked Post Hole Jack, "nine that's ahead of you still? Those strawberries will be ripe."

"Nine? Nine lives? But, my dear sir, one has sisters."

"Don't the girls get any?"

"Dear me, no! Fancy women in the Lords!"

"Then," pursued Post Hole Jack, "you're nothing at all?"

"Nothing but just that." And he displayed to us in turn his name on his letters. As the Doughy looked at it, the boy looked at him with his confiding smile and said, "I fancy you may have noticed it already in the hotel register."

Triumph gleamed in the glance that Chalkeye gave the embarrassed Doughy, who slowly mumbled the name aloud.

The boy laughed out again. "The family would never suspect you meant me if you said it like that," and he pronounced it correctly. "Of course we don't spell it so."

"What's the point?" asked Jack Saunders; and at his tone Chalkeye looked sharply at him.

"Oh," replied the boy with his voice light and distant, "no point. It's merely the right way."

"In America," said Saunders, "we tell how to say a word by its spelling."

"But do you so invariably? One's train on a Thursday morning was in a place they called O-h-i-o, and by Friday afternoon they were calling it I-o-wah. Now what have I said?" he asked me.

The general explosion which burst out immediately upon his words drowned the explanation I attempted.

"Well," he said, looking on at our mirth, "it's very pleasant to excite all this cheer. At home one never aroused so much."

The wild joy of living now seized the cow-punchers suddenly. They swung on their horses and galloped through Drybone with shouts and pistol-shots. At this disturbance, a few faces looked out to see if anything unusual was the matter, found nothing, and disappeared. Saunders walked back to his hotel, and it seemed as if a cloud had gone with him.

"An extraordinary country," said the boy to me as we watched the rushing medley of horsemen. "I like them. I like them very much. Will they come back today?"

They came back in a few minutes, soothed and quiet, and meanwhile I had explained Ohio to him.

"Gentlemen," he said, "have one on Ohio. Is that good American?"

We were soon standing along the nearest bar. "How!" said Post Hole Jack, and "How!" said they all.

"Here's to the Right Honorable Alphabet Strawberries."

"The fall round-up is pretty near due," said Chalkeye, "and I'll be too busy to call him all that every time I want to speak to him. Here's to Strawberries."

"Now you can get a job at the Hat Six," said the Doughy.



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Well, that is the first circus he provided for the lonesome country, and that is how he got his name. Through the weeks following, it fastened upon him, and through the succeeding years he went by no other. He took no job at the Hat Six, or anywhere; at not infrequent intervals, money came to him, always spent soon, often unwisely, seldom on others; like his kind he was close with his cash, and he did not modify this or any other of his native habits. He borrowed readily, paid back casually, yet his pleasant and fearless readiness covered his shortcomings. By his extravagance he kept himself habitually behind, which did not weigh upon him heavily.

Civilized comforts and objects gradually filled his room, where hung hunting-crops, sporting trophies, with the photographs of his past; handsome folk, all with the look of his race, urbane and arrogant, men young and old, and two or three beautiful women, with their names written across the pictures in firm round English hands. When need of money pressed him hard, he would raffle a pipe, or a scarf, or one of the civilized objects admired by Drybone and its vicinity. The lonesome country accepted him, liked him; and one there had become his sponsor and wished to be his mentor.

"Are you acquainted with many of those English aristocrats?" Chalkeye asked one day.

"With very few."

We were gathering stock through the high draws of Casper Mountain, not long before I was to go home. The leaves of the quaking aspens glorified the slopes and splashed the ridges with gold. Among them down below, the boy came for a moment into sight, looking for a white-tailed deer.

"They claim families like his were families before America was discovered," pursued Chalkeye.

"Quite a number were."

"So those dukes and lords have been seeing life for hundreds of years."

"They certainly have."

Chalkeye communed with his thoughts for a while. "He never touches a card," he presently said.

"What's your point?"

"Nothing much. Only with his other goings on, you'd think he'd enjoy that too."

"Too?"

The puncher laughed a little. "He told me lately that he was not my business."

"Said it—just like that?"

"Said it without words. I don't want him to get into trouble with Jack Saunders."

Then I saw it in a flash; I had been quite blind to it.

"Yes," said Chalkeye, "it's her that got widowed by that last shooting at the hotel. She prefers to console herself with Strawberries. Well, in her place so would I. Jack is fifty, and washes Saturday nights, which for him is insufficient. D'you figure his folks back in England are really paying him to keep away?"

"Looks like it."

"Poor kid!" Chalkeye fell silent, ruminating. "A better bluff I've never seen."

A small bunch of cattle occupied us before he resumed.

"But now and then—well, now and then he forgets to keep it up, and a man can see he has been through something." The puncher ruminated again. "I made a little talk to Jack. I guess there's talks he has liked better, but I guess maybe he'll bear it in mind."

How deeply the gambler bore it in mind was not made clear that day, or for many days.

A shot far down below startled us unreasonably.

"Hark!" said Chalkeye.

We reined in and listened; no further sound broke upon the great stillness of the mountains.

"He has got his deer!" I declared confidently.

"He has got his deer!" repeated Chalkeye cheerfully; and we rode down to see, driving the cattle before us through the silence which our unspoken thoughts rendered needlessly ominous.

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Strawberries had got his white-tailed deer with one bullet, well-placed just behind the shoulder; we had been right; it was merely this; yet that shot has left a mark in my memory, as many a trivial event will do when it is embedded among somber recollections.

As we came near with our cattle, Strawberries was kneeling to skin and dress his game, and he glanced up at Chalkeye. In his eye I caught it then, caught what I should have missed but for that recent word of the cow-puncher's, the sort of look which an enterprising child will turn upon a restraining nurse. "He told me lately that he was none of my business," Chalkeye had expressed it perfectly.

On the trail to camp, a rain came thick and sudden upon us out of a canyon, and this furnished our cattle an excellent pretext to break and scatter. Strawberries was after them instantly.

"Let him do it by himself!" Chalkeye commanded me. "See him get his slicker on! Ain't he learning quick? I'll make a dandy puncher of him!" He watched his apt and active pupil critically. "He'd ought to have gone round them willows the other side. Well, what'd you know about that! Did you notice the way he headed that Goose Egg heifer off at the creek?"

Certainly it was all neatly and swiftly done; a better job than any of my attempts, in spite of my three-months' start; and the remark of the late landlord's came to me as he stood on his porch that first morning and reflected on the boy's parents. "If they'd exposed him to the weather some," said he, "he might have been a credit to them."

That had been merely one instance of how this flaxen-haired aristocrat could disarm the cattle-country's rooted distrust of his kind without lifting a finger, without even noticing it; and without the visible lift of a finger he had beckoned to him the late landlord's woman. So much better to have done without her, to have let Jack Saunders have her!

He was now in front of us, driving the collected cattle along the wet trail. The cloud of storm and thunder had gone prowling along the farther hills, the sage-brush gave forth its sharpened pungency to the sky, and the boy, as he passed an Indian-paint-brush flaming by the trail, swung down and snapped its blossom off in his hand.

"He might be one of us," said Chalkeye.

"Never," I said to myself. How should Chalkeye, or any of them, discern the line which Strawberries drew between himself and their equality? Or understand that the true aristocrat always is the best democrat, because he is at his ease with everybody, and takes them so with him?

"Only maybe," continued the puncher, to my surprise, "he can't forget his raising."

Perhaps Strawberries seemed more nearly to forget his raising one early morning soon after this than at any other time I can recall. It was at breakfast in the next camp to which we moved, while he was in the act of learning from the cook how to toss flapjacks. Watching the performance sat various cow-punchers in a circle, and Chalkeye as he passed by stopped and gave vent to a prolonged, joyous and vibrating shout.

Strawberries paused with his ladle in mid-air. "Now why exactly do you do that?" he inquired.

"Can't seem to help it," responded the cow-puncher. "It's just my feelings. When I look at that"—he swept his arm toward the splendid plains and the hills glowing in the sun—"well, I want to swallow 't, and I want to jump on a horse and dive into it." He drew in a huge breath and became lyric. "It makes a man feel like he could live the whole of himself at once. I'd like to have ten fights, and ten girls, and ten drinks, and I'd come pretty near enjoying sudden death."

"So would I!" exclaimed the boy; and he sprang to his feet. "Let's all howl together! Now!" and he waved his ladle. "One, two, three!"



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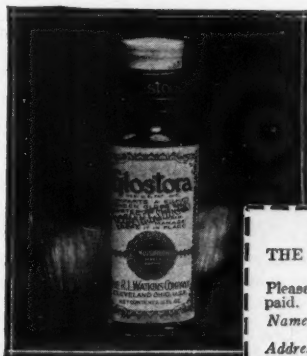
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All of us had jumped up, and in unison we gave forth the full power of our lungs in that crystal air that was like creation's first light. Three hawks sailed out of some pines above, several cattle stampeded below in the sagebrush, the team tried to run away with the wagon, and two or three punchers who were throwing the herd off the bed-ground came galloping in.

And yet Strawberries, when bored or displeased, could withdraw his voice to a great distance. He withdrew it after we had reached Drybone, and with a chill that made the shrewdness of Chalkeye's doubt as to his being able to forget his raising very marked indeed. As we rode to the pos-office, all the dark causes of what was to happen in its due season were present and visible: lust of the flesh, a bully's vindictiveness, human frailty, and protecting friendship.

The widow was standing at a door, and she exchanged a glance of understanding with her preferred lover, who had been absent for many days; Saunders was coming along with a saddled horse at which I noticed Chalkeye was staring. Here were all the causes, needing only the right chance to get them in motion. It took its time to arrive, and on this particular occasion the lonesome country was merely provided with another circus.

The horse was for sale. Strawberries had owned two horses for some time, but he had been looking for a third, with a view to training him to ump. He thought that the neighborhood afforded opportunities for arranging a steeplechase course with but small effort. Steeplechasing would be a desirable addition to the country's pleasures. Here, in the opinion of Saunders, was just the animal for Strawberries, and a bargain.

"Then he can jump?" the boy inquired.
"He can jump, all right," drawled the gambler, which set a bystander laughing.

Neither Strawberries nor I had been long enough in the country to interpret this laughter. And yet—something was in the air, at least, so it seems in the strange afterglow of retrospect.

Strawberries looked the horse over with a practised eye.

"I'll get on him."

"Don't get on him," said a peremptory voice.

At this, everybody stared. It was Chalkeye who had spoken out thus, unwarrantably. He got a very ugly look from Saunders, but from Strawberries he received the perfection of disdain.

"I beg your pardon. Did you speak?" That was when his voice came from extreme remoteness.

"I said not to get on that horse."

If Strawberries had been fully determined not to get on, naturally this would have been more than enough to make him change his mind. He dismounted from his own horse with careful deliberation and walked to the bony animal that Saunders held, a roan with a Roman nose and a watching eye.

"Take your medicine, then," muttered Chalkeye gruffly.

Then I guessed what the matter was, and knew that this was the horse that went by the name of Calamity.

It was quite admirable to see how the boy sat the bucking beast after Saunders had let him go. I should have been flung off in a moment. The struggle began amid expectant silence, the ancient instinct with which Rome watched the gladiator; but when the boy's pluck and skill had held out longer than their expectation, voices broke out here and there calling instructions to him.

The horse went through his list of contortions. Arching his back like a cat, he jumped in the air, landed like lead and shook himself as a dog coming out of the water, reared gigantically, stood on his front legs and kicked his hind ones, sprang forward with a dozen jolting spasms, whirled aside, reared again—until the boy was shot off into the dust, from which he did not rise.

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Chalkeye carried him to his room of luxury among the photographs and soft skins and rugs, and put him on his bed, and got his clothes off; while the widow stood by, useless, lamenting, in the way, crying out that if the boy died she would kill Jack Saunders, she would.

"That'll be my job," said Chalkeye quietly. "Get some water and shut your mouth."

She carried out the first part of this direction; the rest was quite beyond her powers. She was a pretty girl, and still young, with an aspect which told plainly what sort of widow she was—quite the ordinary specimen of her kind. She meant no mischief, but she loved to burst on people with explosive news; and so on her errand for the water her tongue was free, and all Drybone learned of Chalkeye's intention. Except that she sowed a few more seeds for the future harvest, I don't think she did any harm. Saunders wished no trouble with Chalkeye; the cow-puncher had too many friends; and no steps had to be taken unless Strawberries died.

Strawberries did not die. After lying unconscious for two days, he opened his eyes and quietly remarked:

"Leon-i-das
On a one-eyed ass."

This was a quotation. He did not go on with it; he shut his eyes and seemed to fall away from life again. I suppose that poem must have been the last thing in his mind before his concussion. Some hours later, Chalkeye came in from the round-up for news. At the opening of the door, Strawberries waked and surveyed us, and after a time asked languidly:

"Am I a one-eyed ass?"

Chalkeye looked at me in alarm. "Good God!" he whispered.

In the face in the bed appeared a flicker of the confiding smile.

"Am I in the hands of God? Is it as bad as that?"

"You'll get well," stated Chalkeye, instantly reassured. "And you be quick about it. When the round-up's over, the boys want you to go on an elk hunt with them."

So that circus ended happily, and the lone-some country liked Strawberries better than ever. And before the boys went on their elk hunt, he received an unusual honor.

It was remembered that he was interested in the characteristic. Now a stranger had come through the country some weeks ago, and after displaying very marked and exceptional ability by selling the same stolen horses to a succession of different purchasers, had thoughtfully sought another neighborhood. But here it seemed that his skill had fallen short. A conversation stopped abruptly upon my entrance to the cabin of luxury one afternoon. Some ranch owners whom I knew slightly sat there and looked at me and said the weather was fine.

If Strawberries was aware that they did not wish me to know what they had been saying to him, he chose to disregard it.

"Then you mean," said he, "that you're bringing me an invitation?"

"You're the only outsider that's in the party," said one visitor.

"There'd be no outsider," added another, "only he has went too far, and deserves no consideration."

"Of course you'll not speak of this," said a third, to me.

"But you say you haven't caught him yet," said Strawberries.

"We have him located."

"He might give you the slip, you know."

"I guess you can leave that to us."

"And am I to start at the post and be in at the finish?"

"That was our idea."

Strawberries shook his head in silence.

They rose.

"You understand," said one, "it's the rule of the game. He knows the rules, he took his chances. That man is too tough for this country. We've got it to do. You understand?"

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“Oh, quite, quite! Don’t apologize.”
“We’re not apologizing to anybody.”
“I do!” exclaimed Strawberries quickly.
“I shouldn’t have said that. It was rotten. And thanks so very much. And in your place, possibly, you know, I—but it’s not quite the same thing, is it? So you won’t mind?”

If Strawberries ever adopted the custom of the country enough to take part in a lynching, it was not in Wyoming. What he may have done elsewhere lies beyond my knowledge in the many regions where his wanderings took him. That visit, when the ranchmen sat in his cabin and showed him this peculiar mark of their esteem, was my last sight of him at this stage of his career, the last, that is, of any consequence.

I was gone when the elk hunt came off, and no tidings of Strawberries reached me in the East for several months, when friends in Cheyenne wrote asking me what I knew about him. There it was again, the Doughy’s doubt on that first day, forgotten as we grew accustomed to Strawberries! Well, at Cheyenne and at the various ranches of my friends to whom he now paid long visits, it became forgotten in the same way.

The next thing was a newspaper clipping. “Popular Peer Pushes Polo,” was its skillful caption. It was mailed me by a ranch friend on the Chugwater. The same friend gave me news of the popular peer when we met at Harvard on Commencement Day. At the Cheyenne Club, on the Chugwater, at Bordeaux, wherever Strawberries went, and he seemed to have gone everywhere in Wyoming, he first raised doubts and then won hearts; and the doubts were forgotten.

The college graduates who had ranches in the country encouraged his long visits, even though they knew he made them to save expense, and even though at the Cheyenne Club on the rare occasions when he ordered a drink, it was seldom for anyone but himself; I have said that he modified nothing. Nobody minded this in an Englishman; they were glad to pay for his drinks, they owed him so much.

His energy didn’t stop with the polo he organized—at that time a complete novelty; in the following years he carried out his plan for a steeplechase, and another newspaper cutting came to me in the East. “Swell Snugly Sits Saddle.” He sat it in several places, for on my next visit to Drybone, three summers later, he was staying with the cavalry officers at Fort McKinney, and had started them steeplechasing on Clear Creek.

“But none of us can make him touch a card,” said my friend of the Cheyenne Club on Commencement Day.

“He never does at Drybone,” said I.

He never did anywhere. I saw him often during those years, but there’s nothing to tell of our meetings; he had become an institution. Drybone remained his headquarters, but sometimes I found him at Cheyenne, where he would lie in bed at the club for two days at a time, remarking that if I would tell him something to get up for, he would do it. Then his energy would come uppermost, and it would be polo, or steeplechasing, or a journey to Montana for greyhounds to course antelope with (this was a failure), or an extended hunt for elk in the fall or for bear in the spring.

Yes, he was an institution; the sight of him had grown so familiar to the country that it was only now and then that the mystery of his unexplained coming was remembered. His money continued to arrive regularly, and a sporting paper he called the Pink Un; and almost every mail brought him letters that bore English stamps; and these he seemed always to answer within a day or two, giving a long morning to it among his photographs and souvenirs. If I came in at these times, he would look up from his writing, and I knew that he wished to be alone by the very civility of his “Oh, it’s you! Come in.” And as I went out, his apology followed—“If you don’t mind.”



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That's one picture of him I retain: the latest Pink Un lying near him, his elbows spread flat out, his head near the blue blotting-paper, his flaxen hair rumpled in the effort of composition; and on the walls around him, those faces of handsome, arrogant men and women, distant and impassive. What was in those letters? Questions about sisters, horses, dogs, home? Messages to old companions? Was he gazing through bars at sunlight while he bent over the blotting-paper?

"D'you figure he's got a life sentence!" said the Doughgy to Chalkeye one day "D'you figure they'll commute for good conduct? Or will they let him back on parole?"

"I ain't figuring at all," said Chalkeye. "It's his present I'm vouching for, not his past or his future. And I've given all men notice to that effect."

"Hump!" laughed the Doughgy. "You needn't get so hot about it." And he protracted his teasing. "I expect," said he in a tone of judicial thought, "lords and barons and high-ups like that don't condescend to take notice of what low-downs like you and me think of their morals."

"Since when have you been practising morals?"

"Oh, I don't practise 'em or preach 'em, any more than you. But we haven't had his advantages."

A light broke on me, and I addressed the Doughgy. "Do you mean to say that Drybone blames Strawberries for doing just what it does itself?"

"I don't mean to say anything," laughed the Doughgy. "But would he do it at home?"

In that word lay the pith of the matter. The widow, whenever Strawberries went away, had always moved from the hotel into his cabin by way of taking care of it during his absence, and moved out upon his return, but when he had returned this spring, she had remained. Now, although Drybone hadn't a moral to its back, this indifference to appearance in a visitor who would respect them in his own country—weren't the free-born citizens of Drybone the equals of any English subject?

"I see your point," I said gravely to the Doughgy, "though I never met this particular assertion of democratic faith before. But after all, there's a proverb that when you're in Rome, you do as Rome does."

"It don't apply," retorted the Doughgy. "Oh, well," he added, "this country would forgive him a lot more than that." And he dropped his mischievous banter, which had been entirely to reach Chalkeye through one of the few joints in his armor.

In this it was quite successful and it left Chalkeye moody; and a prolonged silence on his part ended in his remarking when the Doughgy had gone: "He says he doesn't expect to stay here forever."

"Strawberries says?"

"Yes. It was the other day when I told him he'd ought to send his woman back to the hotel. I wish she had taken Jack Saunders."

"Then the Doughgy was right!"

"Damn the Doughgy. I guess Strawberries is figuring that it has lasted—his stay, I mean—a pretty long while now, and maybe back in his home they'll agree some day that it has been long enough. Especially if they're told by reliable parties that he never—" Chalkeye stopped abruptly and reverted to the widow. "Of course there's never any use me telling him to do or to quit doing a thing," he finished, moody again. "But," he asserted presently, "he'll work through. That boy'll hold on."

A chance word will sometimes wake us up to unsuspected thoughts. When he said that the boy would work through, he said it to help himself to believe it, and it disclosed to me that a question had been buried alive in my mind ever since Strawberries had taken to living in bed all day at the Cheyenne Club. Was Strawberries, anchored no longer to his home restraints, drifting toward the rocks? There had been more than playfulness in the



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Doughgy's banter; Drybone might forgive the boy this and that, but we began to hear that the wives of some of the cattlemen had requested their husbands not to bring him to their ranches any more. I don't know whether he ever got word of this or not; but in looking back on it all today, it is easy to see that this point is where the sky of Strawberries and of Chalkeye, his loyal sponsor, who was vouching for his present, began to grow overcast.

The Doughgy was reading the latest Cheyenne paper at the hotel. "Hello," said he, "here's another swell Englishman coming our way."

"One of 'em's already more'n I have use for," remarked Jack Saunders, who was dealing cards to himself because there was no one else to deal them to.

The Doughgy grinned at the gambler. "I wouldn't be anxious. This new one ain't likely to wreck your new home."

"What's his name?" asked Saunders with indifference as he continued to deal.

"Let's see, what was it?" said the Doughgy. "His name's Deepmere."

Saunders grunted, and the Doughgy read more items until he had read them all. "Wonder if Strawberries knows him," he remarked.

To this there was not even a grunt in response, and the Doughgy lounged out of the hotel. He met Strawberries in a few minutes and told him the news.

"Deepmere coming?"

And so Strawberries did know him; after that exclamation, he went straight to the hotel. He borrowed the paper and pored over the brief paragraph. He might have been learning the words by heart; but when he looked up, his eyes seemed to be staring at a host of memories, and he sat motionless for a long time, keeping his unconscious hand over the paper where he had laid it on the broad table.

From that same table he had watched the shooting on the night of his arrival; today, with many another experience between, through years of unspoken endurance that the recording angel would surely take into account when his sins should come to be weighed, the experience of a great emotion was breaking like waves against his spirit. I went out of the office, for although he had himself so well in hand that no stranger would have been arrested by his aspect, for me it seemed like peeping through the keyhole to be near him during that inward storm.

Afterward, just as after his trance in the post-office when he had held the black-edged letter in his hand, he grew loquacious and animated. Even his appearance became more like the boy he had been, and less like the visibly coarsened man he had become.

"That's Deepmere," he said to me the next day in his cabin.

I had often looked at the photograph; a youth in his early twenties, of much the same age as Strawberries had been when he appeared to us in the graveyard that sunny morning in the distant past, while the sage-brush smell was flowing in from the warm, undulated miles. I looked very closely at the face of Deepmere now; handsome, arrogant, impassive; it did not answer the question I was asking; no more did any of those faces on his walls, all handsome, arrogant, impassive.

"We were both at the House," said Strawberries. "Went up together."

So they had been collegemates at Oxford; and I told this to the Doughgy.

The Doughgy asked the same question which I had asked of the impassive photographs.

"D'you figure Deepmere's looking forward to meetin' his old friend?"

Some other one of the cow-punchers present rounded this out. "And is the old friend impatient to wring Deepmere's hand?"

Different voices spoke various surmises, until Chalkeye said:

"I guess this country don't need any foreigner to tell it what it thinks on any subject."

They united on that. Drybone was not interested in British opinion of Strawberries.

"But," said the Doughgy, "how about it



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if Strawberries happens to be interested in British opinion?"

Their curiosity was not idle, but it was less keen than mine; and not even to me was the matter of such crucial moment as it was to Chalkeye: the sponsor's concern for the welfare of his pupil had become a part of his life. I don't know what he might not have done if he had witnessed the meeting which too many of us did see, and which gave the answer to our question. Had nobody been present, or if Strawberries had only avoided the meeting—but why speculate? The exile craved an answer too hungrily, suspense had gone beyond further endurance; that must come to an end; and I am pretty sure that he had grown to believe what he desired to believe, and had persuaded himself that after three years it was all right, it would end well. Chalkeye missed the worst.

Until I reflected that of course Deepmere, having stopped at Cheyenne, was prepared, would not be taken by surprise at coming face to face with Strawberries in this far corner of the earth, I marveled at a performance so perfect. A group lounged in the office waiting for mail; the rattle of the stage brought them as usual to the door to watch its arrival. The stage drove up, the brake scraped against the tire, the mail-sack was flung down, and as the single passenger stepped to the ground, Strawberries appeared out of the office and spoke lightly and casually:

"What are you doing here?" The casualness was well managed; not a hint of anything out of the common; they might have dined together last night.

The passenger looked at Strawberries blank and straight with an empty eye, as if he was not there.

"Does one get dinner here?" he inquired of everybody in general.

"Dinnes leddy!" screamed Madden from the hotel porch.

"Somewhere to wash, I suppose?" said the passenger, again most impersonally; and walked off.

That was all. A few seconds did the whole of it; not much longer than it needs to whip out a weapon and kill a man. Unbroken silence continued as Deepmere departed, followed by many eyes that could not look at Strawberries. By the sound of his steps, and next by the distant slam of a door, it was known that he had betaken himself to his cabin.

In there, the photographs awaited him, those handsome, arrogant faces, looking at him out of his past. He knew now what they thought of him; their message had been clearly delivered by his old college friend. When the witnesses of that meeting had shuffled awkwardly into the post-office, while the mail was being distributed they began to mutter their opinions of the old college friend, whom the stage presently took across the bridge to Buffalo; but I doubt if their indignation or their sympathy would have brought much comfort to Strawberries in this hour of his blasting disillusion: the only backing that he craved had been denied him forever.

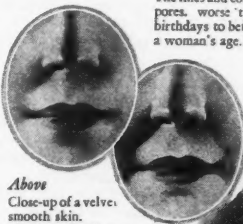
What could have been in those long letters that he sent home? Had he actually written himself into a belief that the hour was on the way when the ban would be lifted? Nobody will ever know. And what was in the letters that came to him? These went on coming, but never again was Strawberries seen to answer them.

How could he bring himself to remain at the scene and with the witnesses of his repudiation? Why did he not leave Drybone and go—anywhere—so long as it was among strangers? Perhaps Chalkeye hit the truth when he said that Strawberries had found out where his real friends were.

For a week he kept wholly to himself; and this seclusion was respected by those same witnesses whose eyes had looked away from him at the post-office. No word of his ever gave a hint of what was in his mind during this time. Was it a spiritual wrestling match, and did his better self make a stand, even

CASHMERE BOUQUET

Below
The lines and coarse pores, worse than birthdays to betray a woman's age.



Above
Close-up of a velvet-smooth skin. No "age-lines" or coarse pores.



This "hard-milled" soap, used every day keeps skin young and lovely

There is radiant, happy beauty in a skin that has the fresh satin-smoothness that Nature gave it—and intended it to keep.

But so many skins have been robbed of their loveliness . . . show coarsened pores, and blemishes. And, Oh the heartaches and the disappointments that result from poor complexions! Only the girl who suffers, knows.

Soap, of Course—But the Right Soap

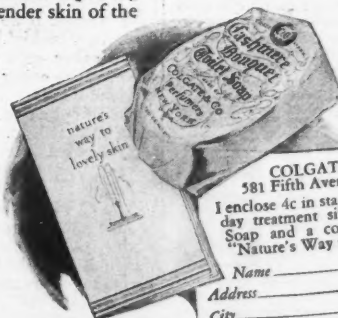
All up-to-date, scientific advice on the care of the skin urges the daily use of soap and water. It is the kind of soap you use that makes all the difference between safe cleansing and the danger of coarsened, blemished skin.

Cashmere Bouquet is made especially for the face, hands and tender skin of the

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though the door of hope had been shut in his face?

At any rate, at the end of those seven days of isolation, he strolled casually into the hotel one evening, spoke to those he met as if nothing had happened, lounged in the office a while reading the latest papers, and then strolled on into the gambling saloon, bought some chips and sat down to the game.

I have never seen a cat when, after long patience at a mouse-hole, the mouse appears; but that is what Jack Saunders made me think of as he watched Strawberries enter the door of his den. His eye changed, a sudden light seemed to fill it, and then his usual look of indifference returned. The momentary flare was nothing that the ordinary onlooker would notice, any more than he would see significance in the step Strawberries had taken.

One or two were there who remarked that they had always thought cards were against his principles, but that they must have been mistaken, for he was evidently at home in drawing and betting; with faro likewise he proved familiar; later, he acquired what Drybone could teach him, and taught Drybone some games of chance not in vogue there.

It was Chalkeye, whom I met one night over at Point of Rocks on my way to the railroad and the East, who drew deeper. He had been for a "whirl" in Cheyenne, as he expressed it; and after hearing from me the latest news of the country, he began to talk slowly, with many pauses; and it was curious how he began.

"I could have made a dandy cattleman out of him," he said, "if he was going to stay in the country." He did not name Strawberries. It was the way you refer to the dead sometimes, soon after their death.

"Perhaps you will do it yet," said I. "No." There was a long pause. "Does he win or lose?"

"Both."
"Does he play every night?"
"He's at it whenever I drop in."
"What does he do all day?"
"Lies in bed. Gets up at card time."
"Wins, you say?"
"Off and on."
"Saunders will get everything he has." There was another long pause. "You'd think he'd tear those photographs up. They've got no use for him. What use has he got for them any more?"

"Well," said I, "they're likely to be all he will ever see of home."

After an interval, Chalkeye said: "I expect you and I don't need to guess what the trouble was."

This was the plainest word about it he had ever spoken. Silence was my answer to it, and in further silence we sat for a while; I grieved for Chalkeye—he was cut to the depths.

"What is your idea?" he presently asked. "Why, just that."

"I mean, was it a first offense? Would they come down so hard on just one slip?"

"How should I know?"

"D'you figure that fellow Deepmere represents general opinion?"

"How can I know that, either?"

"D'you figure it has broken his nerve?"

"Why did he begin again?"

"I wonder if he has spotted what kind of game he's buckin'."

We asked each other more questions like these, which neither of us could answer; it was a way of thinking aloud together. Then Chalkeye drew out a folded handkerchief and showed me a letter it held.

"I was going to get you to put your name to that."

I read: "To all whom this may concern:

"We the undersigned desire to state that during the several years we have been acquainted with the bearer, we have never seen him take part in any gambling game, or known of his doing so. His strict abstention from all such pursuits has been conspicuous in a community where card games are a general

practise. We have found the gentleman uniformly companionable, manly and upstanding."

To this document many signatures were appended—the names of all the leading men in the country were there.

"They shaped that up for me at the Cheyenne Club," Chalkeye explained. "I got them to do it after that Deepmere fellow had acted that way to him. They claimed it wouldn't do any good. But I thought that if he wanted to go home it might help him some."

He took the letter from my hand and was going to tear it up.

"Oh, no!" said I. "It may come in yet, somehow."

He shook his head, but put the paper back in its handkerchief.

"Most folks," he pursued, "can drink safely. Now and then you meet some poor fellow that can't. One glass of anything starts him off, and the day comes when stopping has got beyond him, and the only way for him is never to touch it. Cards are the same with some. Strawberries knew that, you see. And I was betting on him. But his old friend Deepmere happened along. How could you foresee . . ." The cow-puncher's voice failed him, and he paused a moment. "Well," he resumed with regained control, "I could have made a dandy cattleman out of him. Well, guess I'll hit the hay."

That was the last that I saw of Chalkeye for six months.

I came up the river in the stage, and there waiting for me was what I had missed in cities every day—the air, the light, the mountains, the open world, the welcome of the sage-brush smell; even a look at the graveyard would have pleased me, but we passed the turnout to it, and I was actually glad to see the horrible hotel. Nothing was changed in Drybone—save the luck of Strawberries.

It was the Doughy who greeted me with the odd news that Strawberries had suddenly begun to win more than he lost. During the winter he had descended through ups and downs to the bottom of pennilessness; he had parted with one possession after another; he had sold everything that anyone would buy; he had pledged his remittances in advance; he had raffled his three horses; he was afoot. To be sure, the Doughy continued, this made small matter to a man in bed all day and at cards all night.

The boys were sorry for him. His woman stuck to him. She was just as crazy about him as the first day. She paid the bills when his credit was gone. How she got the money, several could explain. He was still in deep, but last week Jack Saunders had come back from a visit to Laramie and found Strawberries was winning. Not every night. Madden won off him, but he won more off Madden.

It was ups and downs again, but the ups had it.

"Sounds like a fever chart," said I.

"Fever, all right!" the Doughy laughed. "Severe case. Madden makes a man think some."

"Another severe case," said I; at which the Doughy gave me a singular stare.

I saw Strawberries once in this hour of his luck, before going to a ranch for a couple of days. His face had become the blighted countenance which had turned toward me like an apparition on that night of his arrival, after he had been staring in at the gambling den. The fever had burned his youth, and more than his youth, away; if you did not look twice, you would hardly see that he had been a gentleman.

A sudden turn of luck, and at this late day? Two and two can readily be put together, if you have the key. I thought of Saunders and the cat and the mouse. Nothing seemed to fit; yet Strawberries winning seemed of darker portent than Strawberries losing. And then, when I was again in Drybone, Chalkeye unlocked the mystery. I was writing letters up in my room at the hotel, and he walked in

without knocking and sat on the edge of my bed.

"I am getting Strawberries out of the country tonight," said he, very quietly, keeping his eye on his boots. That put the two and two together: a new offense, and caught in it here, as at home.

"But," I said, "didn't he know that Jack Saunders was certain to see through it?"

"He knew. But he didn't know about Madden."

"Madden!" I exclaimed. "Madden!"

"Not so loud. Have you supposed the Chink keeps losing his wages for nothing?"

The pen fell from my hand, and I listened to him, dazed.

"Four or five are in it. Do you remember that man from Powder River, and the shooting? He had been dissatisfied with the division of spoils. None of that gang is slicker than the Chink. They got tired waiting, so they greased the slide."

"Cat and mouse," I murmured.

"Sure. And his girl was the mouse. She had known the old ways of the establishment. They figured she would be fool enough to think no changes had been made. Jack went to Laramie, Madden played being busy over his wash—well, she found the cards where they wanted her to find them." Chalkey sighed. "I'll give you all the particulars tomorrow—the time is short."

"You mean," said I, beginning to see through it, "Strawberries fixed those cards and she put them back?"

Chalkey nodded. "Jack can pay up old scores now. When Strawberries comes to the game tonight, Jack is going to kill him. It's safe because"—here Chalkey's voice was very quiet—"Strawberries has been winning from some of the boys who trusted him." After a pause, in which he seemed to sum up and select what more he would say, he added in a voice that was strangely toneless: "I don't want Strawberries killed. We are going to where I have told him a woman was buried with her jewels. I've said it would be death if they caught us. He'll dig. He'd never have stooped so low, once. Then I've fixed up a fake alarm. He'll go. He'll stay gone, I guess. I guess," Chalkey concluded "Strawberries would have held on if Deepmere hadn't happened along."

"None of this appeals to me very much," I said. "Why invent—"

"Do you think it appeals to me?" he interrupted, flaming into sudden violence. "Find a better way."

"Let him have the truth."

The puncher's eyes fell, and by that I read his heart.

"Not easy for you," I pursued, touching his knee, "but surely better for him?"

Still he held his eyes averted. He was bent over with trouble. "I couldn't be sure—" he began; he left it unsaid, and again I read his heart. To let the man he had loved and vouched for have the truth was a bitterness beyond his courage, and worse still, he feared there was not enough man left in Strawberries to stand up to it and kill, or be killed. By his fantastic scheme of the jewels, he had provided a way out. But what a way!

"I'd let it alone," said I.

"No, you wouldn't."

He walked out without another word, and I listened to the slow and heavy tread of his boots down the stairs.

I sat with my pen in hand, writing nothing and forgetting time, while the day faded; until Madden called loudly from below that I would soon be too late for supper.

The day grew wholly dark, the lamps burned in the saloon, shining on the stacks of bottles and the pictures of pink women; and the usual group, with a few stray players, gathered at the tables. The sound of chips and of the voices betting was very distinct in the quiet house. The breath of the sage-brush, the breath of the wilderness, the eternal, impassive witness of our deeds and lives, came through the open door.

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I saw Jack Saunders look up and then continue his game. Some time elapsed, and he looked up again, watching the door; this time he whispered some impatient word to his neighbor, and the playing went on. It was a good hour later that something far off made one listen, and I saw the head of Saunders jerk up quickly. There were shots very distant; that was all; and once again the gambler muttered to his neighbor.

This time he did not resume playing, but sat scowling at the door. The figure he watched for did not come.

A sort of dreariness dulled me, thinking it all over; it was all degraded and dreary; and I got up to go to bed. As I crossed the office, the girl entered and went straight to the saloon door. By her theatrical pose it was plain that the lust for telling sensational news was on her—but Saunders spoke first.

"To hell with you," said he. "Where's the tame pet you're keeping?"

Then she had her triumph and her climax; and her voice rose to the level of it.

"Gone where you'll never get him, Jack Saunders! Chalkey has got you fooled!"

The gambler sprang up and listened to nothing more. While she continued ranting to her heart's content, he dragged on his chaps, snatched his quirt, buckled his holster, and would have been out to get his horse, but Chalkey stood in the office. Saunders shot so quickly that I did not see him fire; and almost as quickly the puncher shot back. I think both missed; but neither stopped.

They passed me and went out of the house. I heard them as they moved through the dark, firing, and I heard myself counting the shots mechanically; they seemed to cut a trail in the night, they went on and on; and when they ceased, I had forgotten how many I had counted. I was standing in the office where I had been when it began; I had not moved a step.

No one else was in the house, and now I remembered that I had seen them running by. I remained quite still, and next saw the Doughy at the door.

"Chalkey is dead," said he. "Both are dead. Maybe you would like to come up and help fix Chalkey."

"Come up?"

"Saunders ran from him when he found he was hit. Chalkey followed him up-stairs to his woman's room. He shot Chalkey from the floor."

The puncher lay across the threshold, a wound through his breast, the only one. Somewhere in the back of the room people were attending to Saunders—I didn't notice. The Doughy and I did not touch Chalkey at once; we stood and looked at his quiet face. There was no violence in it; he lay in a sort of dignity, and there was a grace in the repose of his long arms.

It may have been minutes that we stood looking at the face.

"He thinks it is just as well," said the Doughy. "He had changed a heap. Dying would not have suited him a little bit, once. He loved living up to the hilt. Better company I never traveled with. Gosh, how he could ride. Yes, these last years had changed him. It must be tough to see the apple of your eye go rotten."

Something in the dead man's pocket caught my sight, and I stooped and pulled out a handkerchief and unfolded a letter and handed it to the Doughy. It was not too stained to be read, and the Doughy began aloud, "To all whom this may concern," and then read silently; but when he had gone a few lines he turned his head away, and I took the sheet from his hand as he walked to the window and stood with his back to me looking out into the darkness.

So these two also went to the hill of upright and fallen headboards. At the end of the burying, the Doughy and I lingered in the sun and the silence, looking off at the undulating miles.

"Do you remember the morning when



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THE POHLSON GIFT SHOP

Dept. 168-D

Pawtucket, R. I.

Strawberries came up the river and Chalkeye borrowed your glasses?"

"Oh, yes. I remember."

"They say the Elkhorn railroad will get as far as this next year," said the Doughy. "Good-by, Old West. I shouldn't wonder if I pulled my freight for a new country one of these days."

He did; and from him in California, I had two of the three glimpses of Strawberries I still have to tell, after his path wound away from mine. Once from Redlands the Doughy wrote me that he had seen Strawberries clerking in the What Cheer House, in that town. Strawberries had not seen him; and soon after had lost this job. Again the Doughy wrote during the days when the Western Pacific was being constructed across Nevada.

"I was getting good pay as foreman of a bridge gang," he said; "and one night I went to the honkatonk to spend some and make a night of it. Strawberries was pounding a piano as professional player for a roomful of drunken girls with their men. I didn't spend my money. I went out."

My last news was in 1910, when I ran up the river from Cheyenne in a flivver. Two railroads had come. There was a new town called Casper. Drybone had long been wholly abandoned. There were oil claims. Along the river where the sage-brush had grown and the cattle had been rounded up were fields and fruit and fences: not everywhere; but it was gone, the true, real thing was gone. The scenery was there, but the play was over.

Just a touch, a whiff of the past met me as we crossed La Parelle creek. We came to some high sage-brush along a bottom, and I smelled it, and one of those sudden cravings for days bygone rushed over me—to hunt, to camp, to revel in young joys; I longed to speak some magic word and evoke the golden years—no others—and live them again, and then pass on, or pass out, or whatever follows this. We came to the turnout for the graveyard. It was visible still, but I did not wish to look at that. Then we reached what had been Drybone.

"I'll get out here," I said to the young, green chauffeur.

"There's nothing here."

"I know. There used to be. Wait here."

I walked through weeds, and splinters of sheds, and rusted objects. Three boards of the hotel were standing. Part of the post-office was there. The cabin of luxury was fairly whole, and all around it gleamed empty tin cans. There was a door; and when I saw that, I walked up and opened it.

He was lying in bed, reading a paper.

"Oh, there you are!" he said.

So he had come back, actually summoned by that same Past which we had shared for a while, the Past where his real friends had been! I liked this remnant of the man better than ever I had liked the man.

"Thank God somebody has come to lunch," said he. "Now I'll have to get up and cook something."

This he did; and for an hour we talked about anything to keep off the one thing in our minds. The photographs were there. I suppose the widow had sent things after him. And now he lay in bed and ate tinned food, unless company happened by.

The young, green chauffeur came to see what had become of me, and as I was walking away, Strawberries stood in his door.

"It all used to be very jolly," he said.

I nodded and walked on.

"I say," he called.

I turned. There he stood, and into his face came a something that recalled the old smile like a pressed flower.

"Chalkeye was a good fellow, you know."

"Yes."

"I liked Chalkeye."

"Yes."

"I suppose you're thinking he was a better fellow than me?"

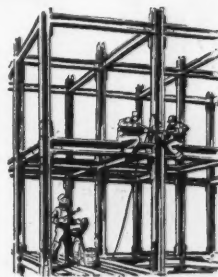
"Yes."

"Right."

MASTERS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Andrew Carnegie

The tense, steel silhouette stretching high against the sky; the mighty network bridge that binds two distant shores; glistening, ribbon-like rails stretching across the continent; monster steam-belching steeds whose racing wheels pound out their rhythmic song of achievement; all acclaim the reign of steel, and mark the vision of men whose foresight and enterprise gave it birth and development. Among these, the humble bobbin-boy who fought his way up to "iron-master," captain of industry and benefactor, ever will rank commandingly as a master of achievement.



James Crossley Eno

He, too, was a man endowed with a great vision. His doctrine of Health for Success, and his well-known preparation ENO, for over half a century have been powerful influences in the promotion of health and happiness, ambition and energy in the civilized world.

"The fight always goes to the fit."

—Sayings by JAMES CROSSLEY ENO

So many people feel just "middlin'"—not bad, but not really "fit." They may never realize how much *better* they might feel, how much *further* in life they might go, how much *easier* achievement might become. The stimulation, born of the internal cleanliness that ENO in a little water or orange juice induces, comes as a revelation to most people.

ENO is a gentle, harmless, sparkling, health drink which encourages the natural processes of elimination. Neither a tonic nor an intoxicant, ENO is an energizing ally for those who keep it handy while at their work. Taken at the first signs of "slowing-up" it tends to restore one's ardor and vivacity.

Children, too, like ENO; it tastes good and keeps them in good condition.



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She doesn't fear the dentist

Wise men and women go to the dentist at least twice a year for a thorough mouth inspection. They don't put off the dental appointment until forced to seek relief from pain and the dentist has to hurt. If you see your dentist in time he can keep your teeth and gums healthy and may prevent serious illness.

Neglect punishes FOUR out of FIVE

Failure to take a few simple precautions lets pyorrhea, dread disease of the gums, become entrenched in the mouths of four out of five at forty, and many younger, according to dental statistics.

Start today to brush teeth and gums night and morning with Forhan's if you would be with the lucky who escape pyorrhea's ravages. Forhan's firms the gums and keeps them pink and healthy. It doesn't give this insidious infection chance to steal upon you.

If you have tender bleeding gums go to your dentist immediately for treatment and use Forhan's regularly. The chances are your own dentist will recommend it. It contains Forhan's Pyorrhea Liquid dentists use to combat pyorrhea.

Besides safeguarding your health, Forhan's is a pleasant tasting dentifrice that gives the teeth perfect cleansing; and forestalls decay.

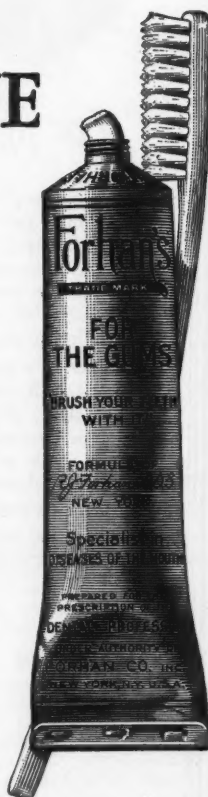
Include Forhan's in your daily hygiene for your health's sake. Pyorrhea is no respecter of persons. Four out of five is its grim count. At all drug-gists', 35c and 60c in tubes.

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Forhan's

FOR THE GUMS

MORE THAN A TOOTH PASTE . . IT CHECKS PYORRHEA



What Price Success?

(Continued from page 61)

demand, "do you always put salt in your coffee?"

"Did I?" replied Cecily, astonished. But added quickly, "Oh, yes—it's nice that way. Did—Mr. Ritchie ask for ten thousand a year?"

"Not a cent less," grinned her informant. "A. L. says he guesses he's got a pretty swelled head and he has enough of that sort around the office now. But I was sorry for him just the same. He certainly looked, when he left the office, as if he'd stepped into a fast one, as my boy friend says."

And that was about the way Malcolm did feel. And, as well, like a man who, playing his hand with an ace in the hole, finds it gone when he seeks to produce it. But he rallied from the shock quickly.

"I rather high-hatted them when they came after me," he concluded, "and they're just human enough to welcome the chance to high-hat me. But there are other fish in the sea."

A flying trip to Boston sundered his ties there; early June found him back in New York. ever so comfortably established in a studio apartment he had sublet from a commercial artist who was going abroad for the summer. This achieved, he let it be known that he was on the market.

The market did not seem unduly agitated by the announcement.

"A bad time of the year," Malcolm assured himself. Nevertheless, he did not worry. He was a high-grade man, an executive of proved record.

Everyone greeted him cordially.

"I wish," he was told again and again, "that we had a place in our organization for a man of your caliber, but we haven't at the moment."

No one suggested to him that if he would take five thousand instead of ten they'd make a place for him instantly. But Malcolm had felt the suggestion hovering in the air several times.

"The trouble, I suppose," he mused, one evening in early July, "is that they have an idea I'm on the bargain counter."

Well, he wasn't. Absolutely not! Suppose he should accept a cent less than he had demanded from J. P. Suppose J. P. should hear of that! And—Cecily! The very thought brought him to his feet as if a pin had been thrust through the seat of the chair in which he sat.

Not that he really cared a hoot about what Cecily thought. It was just that he couldn't even think of her without involuntarily gritting his teeth. In fact, if he didn't stop thinking of her before long, it was to be feared he would need the services of a dentist. And whoever said the world was a small place was dead right. One would have thought that two people could live in New York without being forced, again and again, to avert their glances and pretend not to see each other. Embarrassing, to say the least, he found these encounters.

The fact was—although August had slipped into the calendar before he faced it squarely—that there was no advertising firm in New York disposed to pay him ten thousand a year at the moment.

"Well," he summed up the situation then, "I'm not wedded either to New York or, for that matter, to advertising."

In New York there was, he knew, an agency that specialized in the placing of executives. He made an appointment with the manager, to whom he swiftly sketched his record and his desires.

"And—the salary?" asked the manager.

Malcolm hesitated. "I have been holding out for ten thousand," he answered then. "But—in a new field—I might consider eighty-five hundred."

"Your previous salary was ten thousand?" suggested the manager.

"It was eighty-five hundred," corrected Malcolm coldly. "I left because I was refused ten thousand."

The manager seemed to consider that. Actually he was bracing himself for the explosion he knew would follow his next remark.

"We'll be glad to have you register with us," he said, "and we'll do our best to place you, naturally. But—I feel I should warn you that a position at five thousand a year is the best you can expect of us."

The expected explosion was, as always, delayed by a stare of sheer surprise which the manager made use of.

"You see," he explained, "when you broke off your former connection you lost what we call your service value. We figure that at thirty-five hundred a year—certainly no less—"

"What?" sputtered Malcolm. "Do you mean to say I was being overpaid thirty-five hundred a year?"

"Not at all. The firm you were with paid you thirty-five hundred a year more than they would pay a man new to the job because you were experienced, not only in advertising, but in your particular job as it fitted into their organization. You were worth that to them. But when you start anew elsewhere—"

He stopped. Malcolm had come to his feet. "I," Malcolm announced, "will dig ditches before I'll accept an offer of less than eighty-five hundred a year." And with that he walked out.

"File his name and address," the manager told his secretary wearily. "He'll be back ready to swallow the dose when he's learned his lesson."

Such interviews were his daily diet; he knew what Malcolm had yet to go through, although no man who has never actually gone through the experience can more than guess at its bitterness.

To a man who has known a measure of success and the prestige that accompanies it, the process is one not only of disillusion but of slow disintegration as well. Its victim may look like other men, but he feels like an Ishmaelite. He may keep himself immaculate, but he has an out-at-the-elbows feeling, the sensation of being run down at the heels.

Economic pressure, such as the victim with a family is subject to, may prove actually a blessing, in that it at least shortens the agony. Malcolm was less fortunate. He had ten thousand saved; he need not suffer as he marked time. But he was, essentially, a doer. And he knew, moreover, that every day he marked time was that much more to his disadvantage. A man may take a week, or even several, in establishing himself elsewhere. But when time passes and it becomes a matter of not just weeks but months, the world begins to eye that man askance. He feels that, even shares it.

"Have I lost my punch?" was the way the fear insinuated itself into Malcolm's mind at first. After a time it actually became, "Did I ever have it?"

Absurd as set down. But the thing grew to the point that when Malcolm saw someone he knew, he instinctively dodged. Before August ended he was akin to a hunted creature, never come upon save by surprise.

So, toward the tag-end of the month, Hall, who had succeeded him as head of the Boston office, came upon him—an encounter embarrassing to both.

"How is everything going?" asked Malcolm, the words being no more than a boxer's instinctive effort to cover himself.

"Oh, pretty well," answered Hall awkwardly. Yet Hall certainly looked as if things were booming. And—notable omission—he asked Malcolm nothing about himself. Tact—but it stung none the less.

"Well—so long," Malcolm managed, with specious cheer.

He felt as if he had at last plumbed bottom. He was determined that nothing like this should happen again. He would leave New York at once. Beyond that he didn't plan or

Your Chin Line Reveals Your Age

How a drooping, double chin can be restored to youthful grace. How the telltale signs where age shows first can be erased



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HOW TO DO



care, much. He'd make a fresh start somewhere else. Anything. Writing copy at thirty a week or soliciting want ads for a newspaper. As long as it wasn't in New York.

One hour later he was packing up, in a fever of impatience to get off, yet handicapped by innumerable possessions he didn't know what to do with. Such things, for instance, as the books he had bought about various phases of business and business management, and the magazines along the same lines that he had subscribed for. The magazines, most of them still in their wrappings, he tossed into a wastebasket. Presently the books followed them.

So reducing his impedimenta, he came to that which he had christened his idea incubator. A battered old cardboard letter-file which he had owned for years. An inanimate thing, yet closely linked with his career, inasmuch as in it had been placed all those mental offshoots of his hours of thought and study—a mass of magazine and newspaper clippings and odd bits of paper bearing typewritten or scribbled sentences. Some had developed further. Others had never sprouted.

In spite of his hurry he was checked by the sight of it. He began to run through its contents; an hour later, seated beside the window, he was still deep in it. It had gone with him to Boston, yet he could not remember ever having opened it there. He had been too busy.

"Good Lord," he thought, "how I did work over this thing! And some of the ideas I never worked out aren't half bad at that."

He paused there, his eyes on a slip he held in his hand. It was dated, as was everything he had ever put into the file after he really began to systematize it, because he had found that the date often assisted him in revisualizing the exact way in which the idea had come to him. The date—May 7th, 1924—meant nothing to him at first, save that the slip had been put there just before he had been given charge of the Boston office. He read on:

"Advertise alarm-clocks as time-meters."

This puzzled him for a second. Then it came back to him. May 7th—that had been the date of his class dinner. He had been working overtime in the office, too deep in a campaign that he was working on—he remembered that, too; it had landed the devilishly difficult Hume-Taylor contract—to attend the dinner, but he had planned to drop in afterwards, along about ten, for an hour with the old gang. But in those days, when he got started on a thing time had meant nothing to him. The minutes slipped away unnoticed until he finished—which might be anywhere from eleven P. M. to three A. M.

"I'll ask Central to be a nice girl and give me a ring at ten," he had decided.

But as he had reached for the phone his eyes had rested on an alarm-clock which some copy-reader had been studying from a copy angle. He had reached for that instead of the phone, and set it at ten.

At that moment had been born the idea he had set down.

In the flurry and stress that had followed he had forgotten it. Now it began to develop anew. An alarm-clock, for many years, had been no more than a definitely utilitarian affair, designed to perform but one function. "Get out of bed—get out of bed," had been its irritating, incessant message to mankind.

The vision he had had that May night was of an alarm-clock that would serve men and women all the hours of the day. He remembered too a possible slogan that had come to him: "The private secretary of your time."

And he had let that idea bury itself! "Good Lord! I haven't had an idea as good as that in years!" he thought.

He came to his feet. He visioned alarm-clocks, their new duties developed, ringing all over the land. It seemed to him indeed as if one were actually ringing now. So vivid was the impression that he glanced around. Then, abruptly, he realized that it was no illusion. His front door-bell was being rung persistently. "The janitor," he thought—he had left word that he wanted to see him. He threw



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open the front door. But it wasn't the janitor at all. It was:

"Oh!" gasped Cecily. Perhaps it is not immaterial, irrelevant nor incompetent to add that she blushed. But she was, just the same, the first to find voice. "Why, I thought this was Mr. Masters's studio," she protested. "His name is on the door."

"It is his studio—I just sublet it for the summer," managed Malcolm, though it seemed as if all the blood in his veins was pounding in his ears. "He's abroad for the summer."

"Oh, mi-gosh!" wailed Cecily. "The end of a perfect day—do you mind if I sit down on the threshold and weep?"

"Er—would you care to come in?" he suggested uncertainly.

Cecily decided that she would. Why? To rest her weary bones, she would have said. But that was not the whole truth. Every woman has a bit of the Pandora complex in her and Cecily was not without her share. She had wondered—well, rather more often than she would have cared to confess—what had become of Malcolm, and now that the chance to find out presented itself she saw no reason why she should not avail herself of it.

"I'm afraid it's rather upset," apologized Malcolm dizzily. "I'm packing."

"Oh—are you going away?" she asked politely.

He nodded as he cleared a chair for her.

"I wish I could," she commented frivolously. "Preferably to the North Pole—though Bar Harbor with the family wouldn't be a half bad substitute."

Her eyes, meeting his, were as clear and bland as crystal. Yet they were appraising him none the less.

He had changed. The lines around his mouth showed both repression and suffering. Had she not been a business woman, Cecily would doubtless have attributed that to her refusal. As it was, she came nearer the truth. And, like Hall, she asked no question. Instead, to break a silence that threatened to become awkward, she ventured:

"J. P. wanted Mr. Masters to do a series of drawings for him—illustrating a new campaign. We tried to get him on the phone all day but nobody answered and I said I'd drop in on my way home and see if I could locate him. J. P.'s angling for an alarm-clock appropriation from a new angle, you see, and he thought perhaps Mr. Masters could suggest—"

"An alarm-clock appropriation!" echoed Malcolm, startled.

"Gracious—I've been talking again," mourned Cecily. "Will I ever learn to be discreet? But I'd forgotten for the moment you weren't one of us."

Malcolm achieved a smile. "I shan't give you away," he promised.

"He is sweet," thought Cecily impulsively. And then something in his expression—a weary bitterness—caused her facile mind to glimpse the truth. "Why—I believe you're working on an alarm-clock campaign yourself!" she exclaimed.

"I—sort of had one in mind," he confessed.

"Then—you're with another concern?" she asked quickly.

He hesitated. Then, "No—still unattached," he replied.

What difference did the truth make, anyway? She had seen through him from the first, never had had any illusions about him anyhow. Why try to create one now?

"Then why don't you tell it to J. P.?" suggested Cecily eagerly. "He's got the whole office torn up searching for a new idea. The Hickory Dickory Clock Company has been reorganized and they've got all kinds of money. They're going to splurge on advertising."

"Me put it up to J. P.?" Malcolm broke in abruptly, and all the bitterness of what he had endured was in his voice. "Can you see me crawling back into J. P.'s office that way?"

Cecily said nothing for a second. Then she rose.

"You're right—I can't," she assured him



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coldly. And ever so formally, she added, "I hope I haven't delayed you too much." She started for the front door.

He said nothing until her hand was on the knob. "Please don't go yet," he burst out then. "Why not?" she asked.

If he had answered truly he would have said he could not bear to have her pass out of his life so. Instead, "What makes you think J. P. would even listen to me?" he asked, no more than trying to hold her there.

"Did you ever know J. P. to refuse to listen to anybody?" she demanded.

And that was true. And yet—

"Look here!" commanded Cecily crisply. "I try to be a good girl scout and do my one noble deed daily. To dig up Mr. Masters for J. P. was to have been my offering today, but so long as that isn't possible I'm going to invite you to dine with me."

Malcolm glanced at her in horrified surmise. "Do I suggest the need of a dinner?" he demanded.

"You need the more reasonable attitude that good food seems to give your sex," she assured him. "The dinner will be dutch. I'll give you until I count three to accept. One—two—"

"I'll go," he said quickly. "It's awfully good of you to suggest it."

They dined at one of those deliberately atmospheric, tabled-for-two little restaurants New York has become so prolific in.

"Do you want to tell me about your alarm-clock idea?" she asked as soon as a table was between them.

"Why—it's still rather formless," began Malcolm.

But it wasn't. Again the vision of the campaign he could build around his idea began to flow within him. The innumerable human interest angles, with their endless pictorial possibilities. To the eyes of mankind an alarm-clock is basically a tyrant. But now Malcolm saw it advertised as a friend and ally, with, for instance, the picture of a pretty young mother who, while baking cake or awaiting the minute when a tiny mouth must be fed, or in the interim between any of her multitude of house duties, might enjoy a moment of utter relaxation with the alarm-clock, become time-meter, beside her.

"Read your magazine in peace—I'll call you when it's time," would be its friendly promise to her and many, many others.

This was what Malcolm began to put into words. As he elaborated on it, outlining fresh possibilities, his tone became incisive, compelling. A glimpse, Cecily realized, of that other Malcolm whom J. P. had put in charge in Boston.

"My own experience suggests how the business man can make use of such a clock," he went on. "Then there is the mechanic and the workman who must give this or that a certain time to harden or set."

"You must tell this to J. P.," she said breathlessly. "It's just what he has been searching high and low for—a human angle. That was why he wanted to get in touch with Mr. Masters—on the bare chance that he might be able to think up something original in the way of illustrations. You've got not only that but a brand-new idea."

There she paused. Was the man going to be a mule? She feared so. But at least he did not refuse to listen to what she felt impelled to say to him about his mulishness.

"I suppose that's true," was his chief contribution to the conversation during the next fifteen minutes. The actual truth was that he dared not disagree with her or deny her anything lest, like Cinderella, she vanish.

At midnight—they had danced some, there and elsewhere—she did vanish. Into the doorway of an apartment-house, south of Washington Square, in which she and another girl had established themselves while their families were away. But by that time neither two cocktails nor twenty would have accounted for Malcolm's emotions. He would have crawled up Fifth Avenue had she asked it. Cecily put herself to bed, but she could not

put herself to sleep . . . Supposing, after all, J. P. shouldn't act just as she had promised Malcolm he would? The hot weather had been getting on J. P.'s nerves lately, she knew. And should he act the least bit high hat—oh, gosh! She could just see Malcolm slamming out of the office.

At that point it occurred to her to wonder why she should worry so.

"Perhaps I have a strong maternal streak in me after all," she suggested to herself.

Whatever it was, it certainly interfered with her beauty sleep. And as in the morning her friend frankly assured her, with visible effects.

"To say nothing of your disposition," she added. "A lion with a sore paw would seem an angel of light compared to you. You're as edgy—"

"Not edgy—just jumpy," corrected Cecily. "I feel a good deal as I did the first time I was turned loose in the chem laboratory at Vassar and having mixed what I hoped was this and trusted was that, quakingly awaited what might happen."

J. P. was late that morning and he came in looking drawn and strained. To Cecily it seemed as if everything that could was breaking unpropitiously.

"Mr. Masters—is in Europe," she told him at once.

J. P. frowned. "Why does everybody have the eternal itch for Europe?" he demanded irritably. "I——" But there he checked himself. "I'm much obliged to you, just the same," he told her and smiled. "It's just that this seems to be one of those times when nothing goes right. I suppose the truth is I miss Hall a lot—I had not realized how much I had grown to depend upon him." He drummed on his desk for a second, then added humorously, "The great secret of being a successful executive is to surround yourself with brains—preferably young and hard-working ones. You don't happen to have a young man among your acquaintances whom you could recommend, I suppose."

"Yes—Malcolm—I mean Mr. Ritchie," broke in Cecily breathlessly.

"Ritchie—Malcolm Ritchie?" echoed J. P. bewilderedly.

"He's subtlet Mr. Masters's studio—I found him there last night," Cecily rushed on. "I said something about wanting Mr. Masters to submit an idea for alarm-clock advertising and he—Mr. Ritchie, I mean—has got an idea himself that's a peach, really. And I—I was sure you'd be interested and he's coming to see you this morning and——"

The phone on J. P.'s desk was ringing; she stopped short as he lifted the receiver.

"Who?" he demanded. "Oh—Mr. Ritchie. Send him in, please."

He replaced the receiver and turned toward Cecily. She said not a word, but there was more revealed in her eyes than she dreamed.

"I'll not eat him," J. P. assured her. "Unless he tries to eat me."

Cecily snatched up her note-book, obeying a feminine impulse toward flight that is as old as Eve. But Malcolm was at the door when she reached it; he stepped aside to let her pass. Their eyes met and—that's all. The next moment J. P.'s door had closed behind him. Cecily could only wonder—and worry—as to what was happening behind it.

She need not have worried. J. P. had risen to his feet and, with his hand outstretched, was rising to the occasion as well.

"Malcolm," he said, "I'm mighty glad to see you again. I've missed you a lot."

It took Malcolm wholly unaware.

"I'll be hanged if I can see why you should," he burst out with wholly unpremeditated sincerity. "I—well, I've just begun to realize how hard I fell down on you after you put me in charge of the Boston office."

J. P. gave him a swift glance. "Why do you feel that way about it?" he asked. "The figures weren't so bad up to this year."

Malcolm hesitated. Then, "How is the Boston office coming along now?" he asked, instead of answering directly.



Through the eyes of a Man

[[MEN JUDGE BEAUTY SO DIFFER-
ENTLY FROM WOMEN]]

How lovelier than dreams of beauty feminine loveliness has become! Truly, it seems every woman can be beautiful. Most women are!

And yet, my masculine mind insists upon differentiating between the artificial and the real. It seeks some touch of natural beauty to rest upon.

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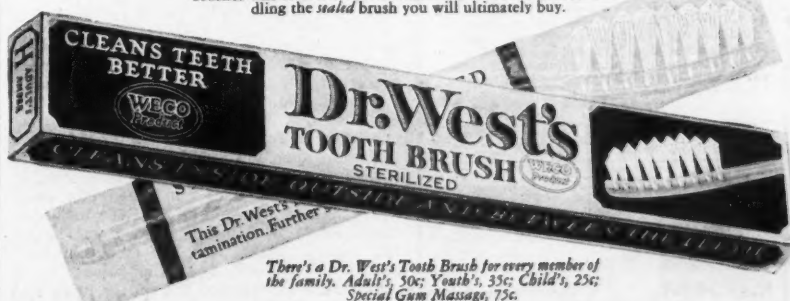
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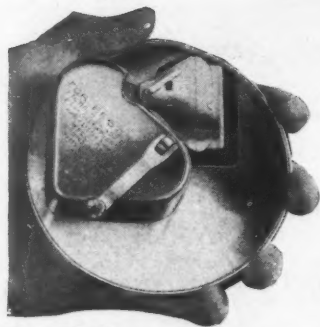
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"Like a house afire," admitted J. P. "That's the answer, I should say," retorted Malcolm. "I was traveling on momentum—another man's momentum. I had, without realizing it, quit on the job. The first little up-hill stretch stopped me. I—but you know what happened as well as I do. I'd stopped growing. I didn't realize that until yesterday. I came across my old idea incubator and—"

There he paused to catch up with himself. For when he had come into J. P.'s office he had not had the slightest idea of saying anything like this. He had had something to submit that he felt pretty sure J. P. would rise to and he had been prepared to use that as an excuse for his appearance. Sort of give J. P. the idea that he had been working it up in a free-lance way, that is. After which, if J. P. had met him half way, why—

But that carefully formulated, face-saving program had been smashed to bits. All the bitter resentment he had felt against his old chief had been wiped out in a second when J. P. offered his hand.

A prince, J. P. Meet a man half way? Why, J. P. was big enough to meet any man *all the way*, and any man who didn't come clean with him was both boor and quitter.

"I have always felt," he heard J. P. say now, "that what happened was a good deal my fault, Malcolm. A word or two from me might have saved you."

"I'd have been too bull-headed to believe you," Malcolm broke in quickly. "I can see it now. I thought—" He stopped to swallow. The remnants of his pride, probably. For what he was now determined to say came hard. But he forced himself to it. "I thought I could step out of this office and pick up another job like a shot. I made up my mind I wouldn't look at anything less than ten thousand a year—to start, that is." He smiled a bit wistfully as he added: "And—I'm not working anywhere. I made up my mind yesterday to cut loose from New York and start elsewhere. At whatever I could get. I imagine I would have no difficulty in getting five thousand a year in New York but—"

"Want to come back at that figure?" asked J. P. quickly.

"No," said Malcolm flatly. "The truth is, I'm hanged if I'm sure I'm worth it. I'll come back for just what you started me at ten years ago—thirty dollars a week. As fast as I prove my worth to you—"

"You'll come back," J. P. broke in quietly, "at precisely ten thousand a year—and prove that you're worth it. I know you will. You've learned a lesson that makes you worth fifteen hundred a year more than we were paying you when you quit. I—"

"But," protested Malcolm, finding his voice, "I—J. P., the truth is that I'm not sure that I can dig up ideas the way I could once. I've got out of the habit and—"

"You've simply got different habits, that's all," J. P. assured him. "From now on you'll travel faster than ever. And speaking of ideas, I'm told you have something in your head that I can use right now. Something about an alarm-clock campaign. Let's talk it over."

Twenty minutes later J. P. slapped Malcolm on the shoulder in a way that made him feel as if he had been knighted.

"Great stuff—go to it," suggested J. P. "I'm going to give you Hall's old office—and believe me, Malcolm, I'm mighty glad to have you back."

"I—" began Malcolm and then his voice failed him utterly.

"Great Scott," J. P. cut in mercifully, "it's almost twelve and you've shot my schedule to pieces. I'll have to ask you to get out now—but drop in late this afternoon and we'll fix up the final details so that you can be at your desk tomorrow morning. I'd invite you to lunch but I've a previous engagement." He paused, his eyes twinkling. "I tell you what I'll do," he said. "I'll ask my private secretary—clever girl, you'll like her—if she'll entertain you at lunch. Unless, that is, you prefer to make the suggestion yourself."

Everything considered, Malcolm so preferred.

"I—that is, J. P.—said that perhaps you might be willing to go to lunch with me," he found himself saying to Cecily a few seconds later.

She glanced up at him. No one to see him then would have believed that he was the same man who had once taken so much for granted on such short acquaintance. Never had she seen him quite so humble. At the moment he hardly dared hope she would give him a chance to tell her what had happened. But that would pass. Take it from Cecily, who had learned about men from many, it would. Be a man ever so humble at the start, he soon gets over it.

"My child," she had informed her apartment mate only a few days before, when the latter had returned home red and explosive, "I am sorry for you, but you're wrong when you say you never encouraged him in the least. All any man needs in the way of encouragement, if he's going to be bitten that way, is no more than to have you accept his first invitation to lunch. After that—"

She had shrugged expressive shoulders. And that must all have been somewhere in her mind now. Time for serious thought, surely, for if she so much as yielded an inch she must be prepared to accept the consequences. But perhaps a curious little pulse, hammering at her temples, prevented clear thinking. Anyway:

"Why—I'd love to," she assured him, with a great deal less than her usual cool assurance.

Unquestionably it was as well that Malcolm was not to start afresh at thirty a week!

Peter's Pan

(Continued from page 93)

you and when I get through alongside of you I'll still look like a matinee idol!"

But dismissing my fears and his own, I rushed him to a phone booth to make an appointment with the overjoyed Helene.

The operation on Peter's "pan" was a veritable triumph of the plastic surgeon's skill and far exceeded the fondest hopes of everyone concerned. Why, I could scarcely believe my own eyes, and as for Peter—well, when the last bandages were removed he sat before a mirror for half an hour like one in a trance, gazing in speechless fascination at his now handsome features. He was a movie star, a collar ad and a Greek god rolled into one! There was not the faintest, not the remotest suggestion of the former Peter McSwing, lightweight boxer, with the face that had been a frightful affront to the vision. In a shaky voice he thanked the doctor, with his eyes still glued to the mirror. Then he paid the smiling Helene five thousand dollars

without a murmur and walked dazedly out of the shop muttering under his breath:

"Well, I'll be a cup of coffee! Creepin' mackerel, I'm the best-lookin' guy in the world!"

Life is indeed the premier slapstick comedian, forever hurling cruel pies at one of us. Let us examine what occurred immediately following the transformation of Peter McSwing. I, for one, shall be a long time forgetting it!

It was nearly a month before I saw our transfigured pugilist again. Then one day he strode into my office and with a gruff greeting sat down, while I gazed admiringly at his symmetrical profile. I couldn't help wondering what the stenographers would exclaim if they knew that the pulchritudinous gentleman opposite me was the same prize-fighter with the terrifying face who had so amused them but a short time before. None of the girls, of course, recognized Peter.

"Listen!" he began ominously. "You and



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that medico and your heavy girl friend has got to go before the boxin' commission with me. You people certainly got me in one fine jam!"

"Why, what do you mean?" I asked in astonishment.

"I can't get nobody to believe I'm me—that's what I mean!" he answered. "Since I got my pan reorganized, nobody knows me. I don't look no more like Pete McSwing than I look like Niagara Falls! I was three days convincin' my own manager and I think he's still got a couple of doubts left. Things has come to a pretty pass when guys which has knew me for ten years laughs me off, hey?"

"But you can—" I started soothingly.

"Wait till I tell you the tough one," growled the handsome Peter. "I shove off for Milwaukee to box Two-Clinch Kelly, a tomato I'm satisfied I can knock as stiff as a head waiter's shirt. They's ten grand in it for me. Well, I don't get a dime! The night of the muss the matchmaker comes in my dressin'-room and looks me up and down. 'Who are you, Big Boy?' he asks me. 'Who d'ye think I am—a Gibson Girl?' I says. 'I'm Pete McSwing.' 'So's your old gentleman!' he sneers. 'Get out of this club house—I ain't got you on the card!' Well, to make a long story short, me and my pilot argues with this clown till nobody can speak above a whisper, but they's nothin' stirrin'. The matchmaker says he's saw Pete McSwing forty times and I'm a cross-eyed liar! Then the boxin' commission slaps a thirty-day suspension on me for not showin' up, mind you, and thirty more on my manager for tryin' to put over a fast one. Can you tie that?"

I couldn't and thus sympathetically informed Peter, after a violent spell of coughing. I am sure that had I given way to the laughter that besieged me, the scowling Peter would have murdered me out of hand. I phoned Helene and explained the situation and that same afternoon we all called on the boxing commission. The appearance of a beautiful lady before that august body caused quite a sensation and was, of course, given due attention by the sporting writers. However, we succeeded in establishing Peter's identity and he was restored to good standing by the commissioners—as soon as they had ceased laughing.

But the playful gods were not yet through with the unfortunate Peter McSwing. They had just begun to smite!

Back in the good graces of the boxing overlords, Peter went happily on his way, with the face that was to be his misfortune still his most cherished possession. His manager quickly arranged a bout at Madison Square Garden for him with one Kayo Lee and the interested Jack went to see Peter train. His report was illuminating.

"Cheez!" quoth the exterminator of vermin enthusiastically. "This Pete McSwing's a fightin' fool—a two-fisted idiot, what I mean! This other boy better be good or it won't go two rounds. Pete's wearin' a mask in trainin' so's that pretty pan of his won't get shop-worn, but he's sockin' his handlers all over the gym. What d'ye say if we all catch this scuffle?"

"Oh, I'd love to!" cried Helene. "I've never seen a boxing-match in my life and I'm terribly interested!"

"Don't kid yourself, this won't be no boxin' match—this one will be a *fight*!" sniffed Jack. "What d'ye say, Art?"

"Why, I'm agreeable, if Helene wants to go," I told him.

I am not exactly a boxing fan, but I frankly enjoy a spirited bout between two evenly matched men.

"Well, count me out—I think prize-fighting is a brutal, disgusting and degrading spectacle!" exclaimed Aubrey scornfully.

"Yeh?" sneered Jack. "And that's just the way I look at that female impersonatin' act of yours—what d'ye think of them berries?"

"Oh, hush, Jack!" interposed Helene. "Aubrey will go. Now, what are we going to use for tickets?"

"The chances is that Art's old man will



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crave to take this one in," responded the canny Jack. "And as he hates to go round without me, it looks like we'll all park in a ringside box."

So it came to pass that the night Peter McSwing faced Kayo Lee in Madison Square Garden for what was programmed as a fifteen-round contest, Helene and her two brothers sat with myself and father exactly where Jack had prophesied.

Her pretty face flushed with excitement, Helene seemed to get as much of a thrill out of her unaccustomed surroundings as she did out of the rather tame preliminary bouts themselves. The vivid atmosphere of the prize-ring was giving her quite a "kick."

Ten thousand animated faces, blurred by the lazily drifting haze of tobacco smoke and curiously pale under the garish lights; the roars of encouragement when a hard-driven fist lands on its human target; the feverishly busy seconds; the bellowing announcer; the squared, roped enclosure carpeted with white canvas, darkened here and there with the gore of some unlucky combatant; the shrill shrieks of the feminine patrons; the businesslike referee shuffling nimbly around the fighters, alert, grim-faced; the rough witticisms of the gallery gods, strangely free from oaths but delivered in a language that is Sanskrit to those not familiar to boxing's own peculiar slang; the thud of leather against yielding flesh; "Knock the big stiff out!"; the hard-boiled sporting writers, apparently immune to thrills; "Just a couple bums—throw 'em both out!"; the bell, reverberating like the crack of doom; the blinding battery of high-powered lights over the ring, throwing it and the nearly nude bodies of the fighters in ghastly relief against the surrounding darkness; "Bring up 'at right, you big boob!"; the panting, sniffling breathing of the boxers, killers for the moment, dollars and fame the incentive; the acrid odor of resin, ammonia, colloidin, perspiration, closely packed human bodies; "Eight to five he don't flatten him!"; introductions of celebrities and near celebrities; "Hey, sit down, you guys in front!"

Well, the Romans had their similar arenas and how much have we changed as spectators of such combats, apart from the matter of costume?

Kayo Lee strode briskly down an aisle and climbed through the ropes to the accompaniment of wild cheering. He was quickly surrounded by the retinue of trainers that followed him and Jack whispered in my ear: "Look at the size of that mock-turtle—if he had numbers on him I'd think he was a box car!"

"Good heavens, what an animal!" exclaimed Aubrey, with a shudder.

And in truth Mr. Lee was a man-mountain, a hairy-chested, authentic cave man. Then came our hero, Peter McSwing, entering the ring with his seconds while the vast crowd roared mingled cheers and jeers. The derision came mostly from the gallery, where there seemed to be much resentment over Peter's remodeled face. In fact, Kayo Lee was implored in bellows that shook the very rafters to make Peter's "pan" his target exclusively. "Spoil them good looks, Kayo!" was the predominant note. Standing in his corner awaiting the gong, Peter McSwing appeared thoughtful indeed.

At the bell, both men rushed to the center of the ring and Peter landed a terrific punch to his opponent's jaw. In one solid mass the spectators rose to their feet howling madly as Kayo Lee went back on his heels. Helene's fingers dug into my arm and she shuddered nervously. However, as Jack expressed it, Lee was "no push-over." He recovered miraculously, it seemed to me, and stabbed his left glove viciously at Peter's face. Instantly a smear of bright crimson appeared on the handsome McSwing's mouth and another hard blow to the same place enlarged the area of red.

That was enough for Peter McSwing! With the evident idea of protecting his beautiful



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countenance at all cost, he began to shuffle backwards across the ring, both gloves covering his head, upon which Lee was raining blow after blow without a single return. The affair had become as one-sided as a photograph and the din about us was deafening as Jack shouted in my ear:

"This big tramp McSwing is doggin' it! He couldn't punch his way out of a paper bag. Cheez, I could stop him myself!" Then he turned to shriek at the ring, "Go on, take a chance, you false alarm!"

But Mr. Peter McSwing was taking no chances whatever with his recently acquired comeliness. Leaving his body unguarded, he continued to protect his precious face from the hurricane of punches being thrown at it by Kayo Lee. Suddenly Lee shifted his attack. He hit the unfortunate Peter with a fearful blow to the stomach and Peter went down as though a rifle bullet had passed through his heart. Stretched full length on the canvas, he never flicked a muscle as the referee counted him out just two minutes after the opening bell!

As our party struggled out of the arena, the enraged crowd, cheated of a long-drawn-out, bloody battle, was booing both fighters impartially.

"Poor Peter!" sighed Helene. "If he had only forgotten about his face!"

"Don't waste no sobs on that banana!" sneered Jack. "He checked his heart at the box-office. I bet if you give him a dirty look he'd take a count of nine! He's terrible. I hope we never see that blank cartridge again!"

We not only saw the blank cartridge again, but it exploded.

The following morning Helene was manicuring my nails in the Mayfair Beauty Shoppe when a shadow darkened the entrance to the booth. We both glanced up into the scowling but still handsome features of Peter McSwing.

"You made me what I am today, I hope you're satisfied!" he growled. "What a umpchay I was to let you people talk me into that face-liftin' gag. You ruined me, d'ye know that? Last night was the first time I ever been kayoed since I first laced on a glove and I'd of knocked Lee kickin' should I not of been thinkin' about my pan. Well, I'm in a tough spot now! The panic is on and I'm about as popular as smallpox everywhere. My girl claims that what she found appetizin' about me before was my he-man's face, with character and the like in it, but now I look like a movie hero and pretty men nauseates her. She wouldn't wipe her shoes on my best shirt. You got me into this gum-up and you got to get me out!"

Well, as usual, when in doubt I appealed to father, a *deus ex machina* who would make those benevolent gods in the classical tragedies look to their laurels. I laid the situation before my quizzically smiling sire and after gently reminding me of his warning that Helene and I were playing with fire when we beautified Peter McSwing's face, he directed me to send the unhappy pugilist to him. I did so, confident that father would solve Peter's problem. My hopes were not misplaced, but if I'd had an inkling of the sensational manner in which my remarkable progenitor was to straighten this affair out, I know I never would have permitted it!

Shortly afterwards, father gave a formal dinner-party to some carefully selected guests in his Lucullian suite at the Fitz-Charlton. I was, of course, present with Helene, as were Jack and Aubrey. The first thrill of the evening came when father's valet Miami bowed in Peter McSwing and lady, a Miss Thomas, a stunning blonde who compared most favorably with the majority of the beautiful femininity present. When Jack had recovered from his gaping surprise, he began to eye Peter's fair companion with an interest that alarmed me and his delight was unfeigned and audible when Miami seated them side by side at table.

Jack has apparently an unflinching "line" with the ladies, for Miss Thomas scarcely took



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her eyes from him and laughed incessantly at his slangy witticisms. This rapprochement was viewed by Peter McSwing with growing distaste and a deepening frown between his heavy eyebrows. Later, when Jack and Miss Thomas danced three times in succession, Peter's annoyance became so pronounced that others began to notice it besides myself. There was that in the air which indicated an interesting climax, but neither Jack nor the lady seemed aware of it.

Attired in an exquisite evening gown, designed by himself, the highly accomplished Aubrey sang several songs, danced with consummate grace and in fact did his regular vaudeville act, which was warmly applauded following the amazed gasps that greeted the removal of his wig. Then the storm broke with amazing swiftness!

"That's a great racket for a man to be in!" boomed Peter McSwing's sneering voice.

There was one of those terrible silences. Aubrey regarded the pugilist coldly and turned his back with a shrug, but Jack strode forward and confronted Peter.

"What was that crack you just made about my brother?" he snarled.

"Jack!" cried Helene. "Arthur, pull him away!"

I started towards the pair, though I confess without any clear idea of what I was going to do. Peter McSwing was a contender for the light-heavyweight championship, and Jack, his equal in size at least, was one of the most cold-blooded killers in a rough and tumble I have ever seen in my life. Likewise, he now held Peter in contempt as a fighter. Well, before I reached them, Peter had answered Jack's question.

"I said if your brother was a man he wouldn't be dressed like a dame—add that up!" he growled.

"It's all added!" barked Jack and his fist shot instantly to Peter's face.

The ladies screamed and sought safety in the other rooms, while the two men battled from one side of the dining-room to the other. Calming Helene, who alone of the girls stood her ground, I noticed a most peculiar thing. Peter McSwing was making absolutely no attempt to fight back and even less of an effort to defend himself. He was, in short, deliberately allowing Jack to cut him to pieces! Stepping around them like a referee, father watched grimly as Peter's face quickly became a crimson mask under the steady impact of Jack's hard and bared knuckles. Within the space of perhaps three minutes, the features that had been Peter's joy, that had cost him five thousand dollars and a knockout at the hands of Kayo Lee, were a total loss. He was again the battered Peter McSwing of old and at this point father spoke sharply:

"All right, Peter!"

In a flash, Peter straightened up. He was a trifle unsteady on his feet, but a wolfish grin curled the corners of his bleeding lips as he swung first his left and then his right fist at the onrushing, panting Jack. Helene's brother stopped dead in his tracks and fell heavily to the floor, as the weeping Miss Thomas burst through the awed spectators in the doorway and flung her arms around Peter. Father stepped over to him and patted his heaving shoulder.

"A doctor will be here in five minutes," he said. "Now, my son, you never need go into a ring again worrying that the other boy will spoil your beauty, for your beauty is most assuredly a thing of the past. All you will have to think about now is winning! I didn't want you to let your next opponent do this thing to you in the ring, I wanted to save you the ignominy of a public thrashing and a possible defeat. Heroic measures, I grant you, but they were necessary and your fear of disfigurement had to be removed if you were to get to the top in your profession. Remember, as some punster has said, 'Be it ever so homely, there's no face like your own!' Now go out and be a champion!"

And Peter did.

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You and I Have Failed

(Continued from page 33)

repeated. "You are a perfect sample of the Victorian, aren't you? No, it won't make the slightest difference to me. Come," he exclaimed patronizingly, "give me a single good reason for chastity, a basic reason that will hold water with a scientific mind."

"Well"—I struggled to meet his honesty with equal honesty—"I suppose my belief is the result of early training. I can't recall that my mother ever quoted the seventh commandment to me."

"What's that?" he asked.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery," I replied. "I can't recall her stressing that, but I can remember very well at six or seven having my lips washed with laundry soap and polished off with a disinfectant because I had played post-office and other kissing games with the boys at a children's party."

Charley laughed. "Perfect! Perfect!"

I went on, watching him with interest. "I can remember my mother telling me that a girl's body was a sacred thing and that a boy's kissing or fondling it was contamination and that her job was to see that I lived up to her warnings. She never stopped harping on the idea. I could tell you a hundred different ways she used during my girlhood to build up that thought in me. When I was in my teens, she added two fears to my sex ideas. One was of disease, the other was of her carrying out her calm threat that the door of home would be closed to me if I didn't behave myself."

"Rough, eh?" commented Charley. "What was the idea? Oh, I know! No birth control in those old times."

He irritated me. Surely one's belief in chastity was based on something higher than fear. But—and here's an astounding fact—I never had formulated that faith. It had been something to take for granted. And yet, what business had I to be irritated, I asked myself? Here was a generation that fear could not hold, and my generation, whose job it was to give a reason that would hold them, had not done so.

"It's something deeper than fear," I fumbled. "Even savage races practise it. It's as old as—"

"As property," he interrupted.

"Older than that. It's racial!" I explained. "But I have never thought it through. I'm going to. You've helped me, Charley, given me something with which to bore to the bottom of the muck heap."

"How do you mean, muck heap?" he demanded.

"That's what the things you young people are doing seem like to me—muckish—indecent. I suppose you'll laugh again when I tell you that I've really suffered during the past two or three weeks while I've been turning up the stories of drunkenness and debauchery—suffered just as you will some day if you live to see all the ideals you hold dear cast away by those whom you had believed would carry them on."

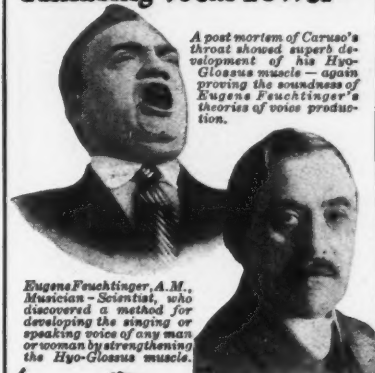
He did not laugh. He nodded and said, "I get you. Sorry."

"Perhaps"—I was thinking aloud—"perhaps civilization has gone ahead of me; perhaps I am, as you have suggested, hardening into one of those narrow, unsympathetic, middle-aged folk, old-maidish frumps, such as were the abomination of my own youth. Perhaps a newer, finer, freer order has arrived and found me too hidebound in Victorian prejudices to be able to receive it."

"It has!" Charley smiled pityingly. "You'd better get aboard."

"I wonder if I could?" I asked. "My Presbyterian and Catholic forebears were utterly horrified when their descendants turned Unitarian and Methodist. They truly believed that with the new creeds their children

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would be damned. Am I that kind of fool?"

He looked a little uncomfortable. "I still don't see why you and mother and dad and all the rest fuss so over unimportant things. To my crowd, this stuff that horrifies you so is no more than shaking hands."

"Why not oblige us, then, by confining yourself to hand-shaking?" I asked dryly. He grinned and I went on. "What do you mean when you speak of important and unimportant things? Charley, have you a clean-cut code of your own? Have you listed certain things that 'no man can do'?"

He rubbed his firm young chin thoughtfully. "Yes, I guess so. I wouldn't let a pal down, or break training, or cheat."

"All good," I agreed, "but—how about the big thing of life—the carrying on of the race, the fitting oneself into the finest game of all—evolution?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Here today, gone tomorrow—what difference does it make? I should worry!"

I should worry indeed! Long after Charley had left me at my hotel in his school town, I pondered over my conversation with him. He was, it seemed to me, an exceptionally clear-headed, well-informed young human being who was utterly wasting the most precious attributes of his youth. How, I asked myself, had his parents come to permit this? Surely the fault was theirs. How could they have so neglected the spiritual side of his nature?

I went back in my thoughts to all the conversations I'd been holding with parents and teachers on this trip and suddenly it occurred to me that they all had been concerned only with what they thought of youth, not at all with what youth might possibly think of them. And in what youth thinks of parents may there not lie, I asked myself, the reason for this revolt of youth? Charley had told me quite clearly his opinion of his father and mother. Impossible, while he held that thought of them, that they should have any hold on him. What were other adolescents thinking about their parents, about this life in which they spun so feverishly? From that moment, I resolved to devote myself to trying to see this problem of behavior through the children's eyes.

I went from Chicago to Oklahoma, where again I visited a friend, this time a widow with two children, a son who had just graduated from Yale, a daughter two years out of Bryn Mawr. They were descendants of a famous Puritan. The son was to take his mother and myself for an afternoon's motor trip. At luncheon the mother said to the daughter:

"Dorothy, if your intended is coming to tea with you this afternoon, please don't entertain him on the porch. At least, if you do, don't carry cushions and quilts out. It's quite too suggestive."

"Mother! Don't be obsolete!"—impatiently from Dorothy.

"I am obsolete and I'm proud to be, though it does annoy you and Brother!" declared the mother, her face a little haggard. "As long as I live I shall insist that an engagement does not carry the privileges of marriage and that there are things one does not do in public."

"I'm sorry," said Dorothy firmly, "but I claim the privilege of living my own life my own way. I shall express my own ego as I wish."

"Go to it, Dot!" laughed her brother. "I'm on your side! Sorry, mother! But you are a bit too Christly, you know, for this day and generation. Why don't you quit worrying? You've done your best for us and that's that. You've been unlucky in having individualists on your hands, that's all."

"I wonder just what you mean?" I asked suddenly. "Let's take a long stride to save time. Brother, shall you wish to marry a virgin or a girl who's crossed the line?"

"Makes not a bit of difference to me," replied Brother, reaching for the salt-shaker.

His mother groaned and rose from the table with a nod to me. "We'll be ready, Brother, when you are."

"They are utterly beyond any consideration

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of me," she said as we waited on the rear seat of the car. "They treat me and my house as if we both existed merely for their pleasure. They appear to owe me nothing, not even common courtesy. My daughter long since passed the limit with men, and as for Brother!"

"You've educated them. Why not refuse to feed them longer?" I suggested.

"If they've got to be this way, I'd rather it would be in their own home than in someone else's," she replied, and began to sob to herself in a heart-breaking sort of way.

After Oklahoma, I talked with children in Wisconsin, in Ohio and in West Virginia. With one exception there was not one of them who seemed to feel that their parents were of any intellectual or spiritual value to them. The one exception was a prep-school boy of nineteen who so adored his mother that he was letting girls and drink alone not because his mother ever had talked to him on the two subjects but because he said he couldn't bear to kiss her except with clean lips.

It was not long after this, my diary shows, that journeying through New Hampshire I had tea with the daughter of a woman sculptor who had been in my class in school. She is seventeen years old, a tiny, delicate brunette, who holds the girls' swimming and high-diving record in her school.

I told her of what I was searching for and this led her to express her opinion of mothers.

"Gee, the mothers I know are perfect frosts as far as bringing up families go. Gee, I could crochet a better training than my mother's given me. I don't see why you should expect us to be different from our mothers, anyhow. Mine smokes like a bum ignition and drinks too."

"I think the worst thing on earth for a kid to see is her mother drinking and smoking. I do it myself but I'm just a kid. You bet I'd kill my little sister if I caught her at it. Not that she'll have any better example than I have. Why, last week, I was at a party where the father mixed the punch and all us kids got pifficated. The father thought it was funny. And I guess it was"—with a reminiscent grin—"every nook and corner filled with a couple of kids, petting and necking."

"I don't go as far as some of them because I'm afraid of disease. Gee, at this party one of my girl friends got so drunk she had no shame at all. She specializes among other things in smutty stories. That's the nightingale's love note now, to tell that kind of joke. I'll admit they aren't so funny unless you've been drinking. Sometimes I get bored to death with the pace. But as I told one of the boys who said he was a bit fed up on necking, you don't get asked anywhere if you aren't a mixer."

I poured her another cup of tea and watched her lovely, unmarred little face and tried to think of what she had just said in the light of my own conversations at seventeen. And suddenly I burst forth:

"God help me to see this thing straight, Estelle! Was I a stupid fool at your age or are you the fool? I couldn't have stood for the sort of thing you girls enjoy. I'd have hated myself and all my friends. This drinking and promiscuous petting—Estelle, have you no feeling for the desirability of discrimination? Will you fondle any boy and permit him to fondle you? I should think you'd feel as common as a garbage can! How can you bear it?"

She turned a little sulky. "It's the drinking does most of it, I guess. Our mothers don't warn us like they ought to. My mother has never told me anything about sex." And on this note our talk ended.

A day or so later I was making a visit at Bettine's home.

Bettine is eighteen. Her father is a teller in a bank. Her mother is a quiet, home-keeping soul. They own their own charming little home and a small car. Except for a laundress, they keep no servants. Bettine had ended her freshman year at college.

When I visited them last week, Bettine was



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in the midst of what from one angle might be called a summer rest cure. At least, she did no work. She never rose before ten, when her mother came in from the garden to prepare her a hot breakfast. After breakfast, she tried on the dresses her mother was making for her, being severely critical, rather peevish, in fact, in her manner. The trying on finished, Bettine took the car and disappeared. Sometimes she returned for luncheon and a nap.

Opportunity came to talk when she dropped in to my room one morning to borrow a magazine and I handed it to her with the remark that I supposed that her heavy college work made vacation reading rather a bore. I added that a sophomore today had higher scholastic attainments but lower spiritual "content" than in my day.

"There you go!" she shrieked. "Just for a moment I thought you were different. But you're just trying to put over the heavy parent stuff again. Let me tell you, I don't consider that I owe a living soul anything. I didn't ask to be born. When I look at the fathers and mothers and uncles and aunts round me, let me tell you, I'm not so keen about going on living, either, and growing into something like them. Rather, something that looks like them. I never could think as they do. I came into this world involuntarily. I'm going to get all the fun out of it I can, any way I can."

"You don't suppose but what I get tired of it, do you? Why, last night I copped a new man, one all the girls are crazy about. How did I do it? Well, I let him kiss me until I had the blind staggers. It's not so pleasant. But that's the only way to get a man."

"This new man, Bettine, tell me about him. Is he the kind you'd want to marry?"

"Marry? I don't want to marry, not for years anyhow. I'll live with a man or two first and see how they wear. Can't see myself tied up to the same man year after year."

"Do you think that will make you happy?" I asked.

"Happy! No! Amuse me, interest me, yes. Who expects happiness? I don't. I'm not happy now. Who is?"

Who is, indeed? Certainly none of the young people I talked with seemed to me essentially happy. They are an uneasy, brilliant, wistful crew. Youth is normally restless but not uneasy, normally purposeless but not derelict. I wondered what had happened!

Going through my diary, here in the quiet of my study, the long trip after information finished, I try to balance the conversations I had with youth against those with middle age. I am groping first to find what the young people are after, and secondly, why it seems to the older people that their desires are wrong.

It strikes me as very curious that while many of the young people to whom I talked were conscious of the fact that they wanted something, none of them could give a name to their desires. They were dissatisfied or unhappy, as far as they knew, only because people sought to deprive them of the pleasure of the moment, or because, the pleasure of the moment being won, it had hurt rather than pleased them.

The adults too—myself among the lot—have focused their attention and their resentments on the trespasses of the moment, the promiscuity, the extravagant selfishness, the drunkenness. We've laid these trespasses to a belligerent cussedness, peculiar to this generation of youth. . . . It has not occurred to us, or to the children, to look beneath, to wonder if the trespasses might be a symptom and not the disease itself.

It did not occur to me to wonder thus until I had studied my diary threadbare, searching for an answer to my own question. If this is a revolt, what is the revolt for?

Youth doesn't know. It would say that revolt is too concrete a word for its uneasiness. But youth's saying so would be incorrect. A revolution is an attempt to overthrow one government and substitute another nearer to the heart's desire. It is based on unhappiness, instigated by a sense of injustice, formulated by a desire for rights denied.

Youth in revolution, then? You will answer at once that never in the history of the world have young people so completely possessed every right, every privilege that leniency could give or selfishness take. Quite true. All that a world made rich and soft by invention can provide we have turned over to our children; automobiles, movies, country clubs, no responsibilities, no hardships, money, ease, endless amusements. What is there left for them to desire?

I answer, they still desire the inalienable right of children. They crave the happiness that comes only with spiritual fullness. Spiritual fullness? Yes! Think, with me, of all the young people you know, and how can you help agreeing that, back of it all, lies a poverty of soul that is appalling?

They are spiritual starvelings, the youth of today. They do not know it, save subconsciously. But all their trespasses are based on the fact that we, the adults responsible for them, have failed to provide them with moral food. Meagerly supplied ourselves with moral sustenance, we have visited total deprivation on our children.

We have failed to make inevitable for them those adventures of soul and mind by which alone human beings come to their full stature, which it is every child's right to have, which alone provide the happiness that moves the race upward.

Perhaps more pitiful than our failure with our sons in this connection is our failure with our daughters. On my trip I heard ten times more bitter condemnation of girls than of boys. There is a sound though usually subconscious reason for this. The morals of our women are directly interlocked with the welfare of the next generation. We cannot but view with extreme uneasiness any departure of our womenkind from the ways that so far have seemed to safeguard our progeny. My generation can look with a certain stupid complacency on unchastity in men, but not in the mothers of our grandchildren. We have thought of our daughters, as we have thought of women in general, as the spiritual custodians of the future.

Yet we have failed to teach them how to be so.

That's a high-sounding phrase, "adventures of soul and mind"; but it is based on the most understandable of human ways and experiences.

There is first the matter of discipline. Any child who reaches adolescence without having undergone a wise yet severe course of disciplining from parents and teachers, has no foundation on which to build the "stately mansion of the soul." A quarter of a century ago, a group of educators developed the idea that severe punishments visited on a child vitiated his will, planted in him fears and hates that later would handicap his best development. The theory had many sound aspects. If its use had been confined to the few, very few, educators and parents fitted by nature and training to handle it, the children on whom it was used undoubtedly would have developed into superior human beings.

Unfortunately the idea was seized upon with avidity by the sentimentalists and the sluggards among parents and teachers. They interpreted it to mean no discipline of the young, and we have with us today the first crop of youngsters brought up under no restraint. They are so numerous and so active that apparently they have submerged the rare children, trained in the old strict régime. The initiative, the strength of judgment, the independence of thought and action which the "new" education, it is claimed, will develop in a child, all have appeared. But, unhappily for the world, the initiative of a child is more apt to be unsocial than social. His judgment cannot be balanced by experience and it would appear that his independence of thought and action is more likely to lead him to a roadhouse than to a place of high thinking and simple living.

Adventure—discipline. The two words go

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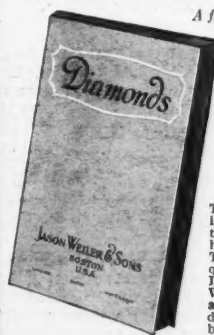
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hand in hand. From Marco Polo and Columbus to Peary and Byrd, from Pocahontas to Helen Wills, from Shakespeare to Kipling, from Rosa Bonheur to John Sargent, self-control, self-denial, self-discipline have been the base on which achievement has been reared. To very, very few is given the will-power, the initiative which imposes on self the discipline essential to success. Most of us have to acquire this, have to have it forced upon us by punishments from those who are in authority over us. If they do not give it to us, they are robbing us of our chance for our particular adventure, an unpretentious adventure though it might be.

When one of my children was small, I spanked her severely because she had stopped to whine "I don't want to" when I gave her an order. A school-teacher who was visiting me protested against my severity. I admitted that I was harsh, but this was my excuse. Shortly before, I had been crossing the street in our quiet village and had allowed the child to run ahead of me. An automobile came suddenly round the corner and I shrieked to the child "Run! Run ahead!" Instead of running, she had stopped, turned and whined "I don't want to!" Only the grace of heaven and the quick turn of the chauffeur onto the sidewalk had saved the child's life. From that moment, my constant effort has been to force my children to obey with soldier-like promptness.

During the past three months I have thought many, many times of this episode, for I have asked many, many parents why they did not forbid their children to drink, to stay out all night, to go off with the family car. And I have received always the same reply—"They won't obey orders." In other words, their children are standing in the street with the juggernaut bearing down on them, while the parents shriek impotent commands from the curb.

Of what supreme value, at this moment, it would be if the old-fashioned virtue of obedience had been inculcated in the young people! We could then have at least one weapon for rescuing them from the cheap and tawdry gods they are following.

For surely these pleasures they so relentlessly pursue are cheap and worse than cheap. Drink and promiscuity! Let the "intelligence" build choice and lewd phrases as they will, the gods they praise are not true, the adventure to which they beckon is not authentic.

Yes, you may say, we grant you the value of discipline, but that's only a beginning. After that what?

After that, I reply, discipline having plowed and harrowed the ground and made it ready for spiritual seeding, after that the code; that code which we took for granted because we still as children were partially sheltered by the wings of Puritanism, that code which the loss of religious influence has weakened and all but destroyed.

Curiously enough, thinking it over, one realizes that as it was science which took religion from us, it is science which is bringing it back to us based not on blind faith but on unalterable fact.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery" was sufficient for many ages to preserve the sanctity of the home. It sufficed so long as the prohibitions of the Bible were authoritative to the majority of us. When the Bible ceased to be the word of God to us, when we ceased to uphold the hands of Moses and the Ten Commandments as holy things must be upheld, when the church ceased to be an integral part of our lives and the lives of our children, the Christian code on which our civilization rested lost its grip.

We are not to be blamed for discarding, as science taught us to discard, the naive conception of God speaking His word to that superb old lawmaker on Mount Sinai. We are supremely, criminally to blame for not having recognized, for not having taught our children that inasmuch as the Ten Commandments

contain the essentials for the preservation of the race, they are in very fact the word of the Creator of that race.

That they contain these essentials, science has proved. It has proved, for example, that the virility of a nation is in direct proportion to the chastity of its best women.

If you ask me what ought to be the tenets of youth's code, the code which will lead him to his true pleasures, to his best fulfillment, I will answer first, chastity. Chastity, because of what science says of it and because the most fundamental, the most abiding, the most potent loyalty that the normal human being has within him is loyalty to his race and to his nation. As far as I can observe, the noblest satisfaction this life has to offer a man is that of having served well his race and his nation. To my philosophy, chastity is a racial obligation.

As one corollary to chastity, I place sobriety—because science and observation have taught me that drinking alcohol removes one from the captaincy of one's own soul, substituting a first mate whose vision is blurred, whose will is vitiated, whose sex desires are easily inflamed. Science reports that intemperance and immorality are Siamese twins.

As another corollary to chastity, I place belief in the sacredness of the institution of home; home the safe nest for children, home the spot where both parents find their highest obligations, their deepest satisfaction. Unless such belief is taught to our young people, not indirectly but word by word, precept on precept, the home ideal will disintegrate. A nation is only a huge grouping of homes.

Discipline, self-control; then chastity, sobriety and a high ideal of home building; then the high adventure which is youth's inalienable right. What is that adventure?

So long as we offer as the nearest and easiest pleasure, the movie, the motor, the gin flask, the unchaperoned dance, to these youth will devote itself. But if we are willing to give mental effort and time to the task, we could develop what I have called before "authentic" pursuits; high adventures of the mind and the senses that would crowd out to a large degree the evil and lurid pastimes. Art in all its many great and little aspects, science with its rich trails, religion in its modern applications, what do they not possess for the fascination of the eager minds that are wasting themselves so cruelly?

The weak point in this suggestion is that carrying it out would demand a huge sacrifice of time on the part of parents. And that is exactly what the modern parent is unwilling to sacrifice. Business, bridge, golf, the exciting fad, cocktail parties, dancing, the management of the club, the devotion to community welfare, all these come between us and our devotion to the training and amusing of our own adolescent sons and daughters.

Thinking over my experiences of the past three months quite calmly, I state emphatically that the parents of my generation are a tragic failure.

I lay the blame for the moral debacle of today squarely on the parents' shoulders. The archaic church, the custard system of education, deeply culpable, yes, but only indirectly. It is we parents who make or unmake church and school. We are the ones who permit to exist the vulgar license of the country club, the indecent opportunities of the automobile. We, who have done away with the chaperon idea, giving over the guardianship of our daughters' virtue to boys and girls whose ideals of morality would have been scorned by the early American Indian. We, of a pioneer stock whose vitality is dependent on our staying close to the soil, who have established a standard of living that vitiates our race strength with every hour we enjoy it.

These boys and girls with their pitiful and passionate pursuit of vicious pleasures are monuments to our unforgivable inadequacy as fathers and mothers.

It is against this inadequacy that youth is revolting.

Madeleine of Creille

(Continued from page 45)

patriarchal functions. As he had married most of the inhabitants of Creille, stood godfather to their children, and manifested an absurd interest in their doings, he was regarded rather as a father of the town than as an official of the French Republic. Would the Lord Mayor of London take a tiring journey to Penzance and back, just because a young citizen of no account had got into trouble? No, of course he wouldn't. But he, Tombarel, Mayor of Creille, was at the beck and call of every ne'er-do-well in the place. It was a dog's life. He swigged down half his sticky drink which the waiter brought, wiped his white mustache and leaned back with an air of relief, like a giant refreshed with wine. He pulled out a crumpled telegram from his pocketbook and threw it across the table.

"What do you think of that?"

I read: "*In maximo periculo. Veni in auxilio. Silentium veteribus.*"

Which, being translated into the vulgar tongue, is: "In greatest danger. Come to my help and don't tell my old people."

"Why Latin?" I asked, in some amazement, for the young man in a tiny general store in a remote country village is usually not conversant with the dead languages.

"He was going into the priesthood and had a seminary education. He found he had no vocation, so threw it over. Very likely Madeleine Capenas had something to do with it. Anyhow—you see—he telegraphed in Latin. And why? Because the messages that depart and arrive in the *Postes et Télégraphes* at Creille become everybody's property in two hours."

"And was young Guil in *maximo periculo*?" I asked.

"*Mon Dieu*, yes. He is here, now, in Nice, in charge of my good friend Docteur Isnard. I brought him with me."

"What's it all about?" I asked.

He told me. He told me backwards and forwards, as is the way of Tombarel, in picturesque narration.

But I had better set down his story here in some sort of logical sequence.

Of course Madeleine Capenas was the central figure of the tale, and to understand it we must go back a few years. We must also consider the hierarchy of Creille, this little town of two thousand inhabitants, standing remote on a hilltop in the middle of the wild Maritime Alps. Tombarel, gentleman, man of culture, ex-land-surveyor and landed proprietor, was the acknowledged *grand seigneur* of the place. Next to him ranked the old Doctor Baradoux, who also possessed a small farm. Then, officially, came the *curé*, a fat, lazy man, whose only blemish in the eyes of his flock was that he came from so outlandish a place as St. Raphael. After this more or less official trio ranked, far and above all the citizens, Octave Guil, proprietor of the emporium in the little arched *Place de la Mairie*, known as "*Aux Arcades de Creille*." He was a man of impeccable honorability. He gave excellent value for the citizen's money. When a woman, buying a dress length, challenged him as to price with the tale that her sister had bought the same material in Nice for fifty centimes a meter less, he would say:

"Wait a month or two and see what Madame Visteron says of the *camelot* she buys in Nice. All this came from Lyons where everything is solid."

And, sure enough, the shoddy stuff of the great cheap Nice shop always proved unsatisfactory and incomparable with the slightly dearer products offered by Octave Guil. Yes, he was a rich man, as wealth goes in the hidden spots of France. He had also bought a few farms and vineyards both in Creille and round about. He could very well



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afford to send his son to a good school and the best seminary in Nice.

Now we have to look at the other end of the social scale.

Old Capenas inherited from his father the tiniest little long broken-down farmhouse, and a few acres of ground. Père Capenas was a joiner and carpenter. His son, Louis, followed his father's trade. He married the daughter of an undistinguished jobbing gardener from Roquebrune. The elder Madame Capenas having died years ago, Louis and his wife took charge of the *mas*, the business, and Père Capenas. They were *braves gens*, honest and thrifty folk, and increased, almost meter by meter, their landed possessions. The child, Madeleine, was born. She was brought up in the dust and wind and sunshine, among fowls and olives and vines, and sent forth, in her tender years, barefoot, with a crooked stick, to herd the family goats on the mountainside. Until she went to Paris as a young woman, she had never tasted cow's milk. "Ahl le bon lait de chèvre," she would say when she returned to Creille.

Now, between Madeleine Capenas and Ferdinand Guil, son of the wealthy tradesman, was fixed the gulf that lay between the beggar maid and King Cophetua.

It was only during the war, when they were children in their teens, when Louis Capenas had been discharged and began his long calvary at home, that they met; the wild, full-breasted, semi-Italian beauty of sixteen, and the shy, intellectual boy of the same age. How and when and where they met mattered little. Creille is a miniature place, but the mountains provide an infinity of lovers' paths. To parents their meetings were scrupulously unconfessed.

All this pristine love-making took place during a summer holiday of Ferdinand.

As I am only telling you the tale as it was told to me, I must skip some years, or, at best, give only facts of certain happenings. Père Capenas, becoming old and infirm, retired from his carpenter's trade. His wine and olive business flourishing, he consulted Monsieur le Maire—nobody in Creille seemed to do anything without bringing Tombarel into it—and at last invested fifty francs' capital in the printing and the expedition to those on the coast interested in wine, of cards, bearing the legend:

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by which he proclaimed that he, Silvestre Capenas, vineyard owner, but lately a joiner, was prepared to sell wine to anybody, wholesale or retail.

But in spite of this brave flourish, life grew very hard for Père Capenas, and the lung-struck and helpless Louis and his hard-working wife, and for the resplendent Madeleine.

In order to contribute a few francs a week to the family budget, Madeleine went as waitress to the Hôtel de Commerce, the only hotel in the town, on the Place Georges Clemenceau, which, as readers of these chronicles know, is opposite the café kept by my friend Monsieur Pogomas.

The goddess came from the machine, in the form of an American lady, a Mrs. Van Oost, who, in a reckless trip through the Riviera hinterland, stopped for luncheon at the Hôtel de Commerce.

The why and wherefore of all this is obscure. All I know is that the impressionable Madame Van Oost, estimating it a crime against humanity that such beauty and charm should be left to wither in a mountain fastness, carried her off, more or less then and there, as a personal maid, at a salary which, to the Capenas family, seemed fantastic.

This was when the girl was seventeen. Thence onwards, there was a monthly flow of money into the Capenas coffers. She stayed

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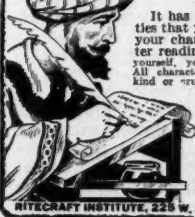


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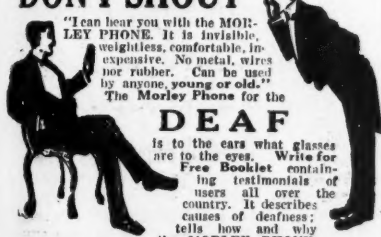
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with Mrs. Van Oost, traveling with her over Europe and America until there came a breach. But, even then, when she wrote to say that she had entered the service of Madame de Saules, the subsidy continued. Indeed, the subsidy gradually increased. The Capenas family blessed the name of Madeleine.

Once a year at least she returned, more and more developed in her insolent beauty, yet less and less conscious of it; more and more eager to help *ses trois vieux*—her three old people—on their way. And always she appeared among them in peasant dress, with the peasant girl's modern modification of attire, which she had always worn. And when her father, Louis, would protest, she would laugh.

"You are good, my daughter, to leave Paris and all its delights, to come and bury yourself in this outpost of the world."

"But Paris! There is no air in Paris. Here I fill my lungs. Here I fill my heart. In Paris there are no chickens, no *père et mère*, and no *grand père* Capenas, and no mountains and no goats. I can't live without the goats which I used to drive with a stick when I was little."

And the longer Madeleine remained in the service of Madame de Saules, the more often did she make her sudden appearances at Creille.

Now the devil of it was that her visits so often coincided with those of young Ferdinand Guiol, seminarist, supposed, by his elected vocation, to have prematurely and hermetically sealed a heart against the temptation of feminine charms. Madeleine Capenas became too much for young Ferdinand Guiol. Too much, in fact, for his religious vocation. He threw, according to the old French saying, his priest's robe to the nettles. The good Octave Guiol, unaware of the particular, but aware of the general, saw things with a Frenchman's wisdom, and, absolving him from the sacerdotal career, took him into his own business. After all, he was the only son; and it was his mother, unreasonably devout, who had destined him for the church. Octave Guiol chuckled gleefully, yet quietly, as every man does who scores a victory over a masterful wife. Ferdinand was sent to Lyons to learn the mysteries of haberdashery.

It was in the after years that the complications came about. Ferdinand declared to his parents that he could not live without Madeleine Capenas. His parents, though perfectly well-informed, demanded further information concerning the Capenas family. Poor peasants, grandfather, sire and mother, stricken with poverty, without a *centime* of dowry for the girl.

It was impossible. As well talk of the *filles* Graubartin, the last of drabs of the town.

But Ferdinand Guiol had fallen irrevocably in love with Madeleine Capenas, and that, as far as he was concerned, was the end of the matter. The other side of the matter, however, was that Madeleine greeted him always with her luminous, ironical eyes, and would have nothing whatever to do with him.

There arose a feud between the Guiol and Capenas families. The prosperous drapers accused the daughter of peasants, who could bring but a derisory dowry, of entrapping by siren arts their innocent and unsophisticated son. They withdrew their custom from Père Capenas who, hitherto, had supplied them with wine. Père Capenas forbade his household to deal with the Guiol establishment. This had its drawbacks, as nothing, from a needle to a pair of *espadrilles*, could be bought in the town save at the Arcades de Creille.

Tombarel, consulted by both parties, was both bored and worried to the limit of human endurance. To the Guiols he said:

"But why this making of ill blood? It isn't as though they were dying for each other. You see very well that Madeleine Capenas will have none of him."

Which, naturally, brought down a maternal storm on Tombarel's head.

And why not? Did the once barefooted goose-and goat-herd think herself too good for their son? Just because she lived as a servant in Paris, could she put on airs? Oh, no! She

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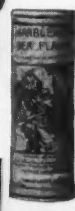


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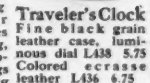


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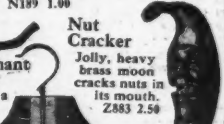
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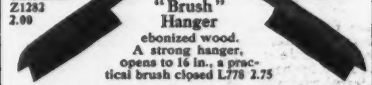
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should be overwhelmed with the honor that Ferdinand was conferring. And Monsieur Tombarel must mark that Ferdinand was approaching her *pour le bon motif*. Nothing less than marriage. If it had been otherwise, it would have been none of their business, provided it didn't jump to their eyes. Youth was youth. *Que voulez-vous?* But this was serious. It was mad, besotted, delirious on the part of Ferdinand, but there it was.

"And there it has to be," replied Tombarel. "The Capenas family are peasants, but they are *braves gens*. They are as scrupulous on the point of honor as we others"—gracefully he included himself with the Guilos. "They are jealous of the chastity of their womenfolk, like all mountain peoples. Pardon me, Madame Guil, but the question of an *amourette*, or whatever you like to call it, could never have arisen."

"She has cut herself off from the mountains. Who knows what she does in Paris with that face and figure?"

Tombarel felt inclined—so he told me—to retort that such beauty would be wasted on a wretched little recalcitrant seminarist like Ferdinand. But he forbore. As Mayor and Patriarch of Creille, he must soothe the fever of human passions.

"After all," said he, "the girl is not often here. Ferdinand is young. He will recover. Find out some eligible *jeune fille* in Nice among your acquaintance, and arrange a marriage with her parents, and he will be as gentle as a lamb."

Here then was the Capenas point of view. Père Capenas couldn't imagine a more advantageous marriage for Madeleine. He had few ideas beyond the circumvallation of the little hill town, and Ferdinand Guil was the richest young man within his horizon. If it came to a question of dowry, he had his *bas de laine*, which would astonish a good many people.

"I don't tell that to everybody, Monsieur Tombarel. But you are the repository of many secrets." There were many *sous*, garnered one by one in his figurative woollen stocking. "Even gold," he whispered in Tombarel's ear. "But hush!"

"If you can bring a dowry to the Guilos, what's all the fuss about?" asked Tombarel.

The fuss seemed to be that Madeleine was obdurate. She was the best daughter that ever was, but she stood there a Sainte Nitouche, and made mock of Providence.

"I wash my hands of the whole affair," said Tombarel at last. "Arrange things as it pleases you."

Now Madeleine came to Creille at varying intervals, mostly unexpected, some three or four times a year. On the moment of arrival, she threw off the lady's maid and, whatever airs she had assumed in Paris, became the peasant girl who in her childhood had run barefoot after goats and geese with a stock in her hand. She took direction of the squalid little house, cooked the simple meals, relieved her mother in attendance on the dying Louis, and did what turn she could among the olives and vines, so as to aid the septuagenarian grandfather.

"She was a wonderful girl," said Tombarel to me in the course of his story. "Devoted. Paris and all the haunts of fashion to which she was called, were dropped like a garment. She became, literally, the *filie de paysan*. And that, as far as I could see, without any thought behind. No hint of playing a game. Listen, my friend. They are my nearest neighbors. I'm not quite so old as Père Capenas, but we were boys together . . . I married Louis and his wife. So I knew Madeleine before she was born . . ."

"These people are of the old mountain stock. It is the fashion of you English, solely on account of our lying novelists and dramatists who for generations have had nothing better to do than to blacken our character—you English—well, not you, *mon ami*, because you understand us—but the majority of your compatriots think that we are a nation of low morals, that every husband asserts a right to

every other man's wife, and every man's wife is a prey to any man who presents himself.

"That's all lies, my friend. In Paris, as in every Babylon in the world's history, there is a social scum. In the Bible there's something about neighing after one's neighbor's wife. It's older than Babylon. But France is moral. The bourgeoisie is stupidly moral. Our mountains are not only moral, but fiercely chaste. It's the primary instinct of self-preservation . . . I'll talk to you a lot of philosophy about it one of these days . . . What was I saying? Eh, *bien oui*—the *famille* Capenas. I know them, and I know their pride. So I knew Madeleine."

Her family regarded her as an angel fallen from Heaven. As her wages increased, so did her remittances to the family coffers. In spite of Père Capenas's boasted hoard, they would have felt a great pinch of poverty had it not been for Madeleine.

There was a little scene, last year, which Tombarel described to me.

He had wandered down the rocky path that led to the Capenas domain, on wine-growing affairs, and had found them in full *vendange*, crushing the newly picked grapes. Even Père Capenas was modern enough to use a wooden grape-presser—the treading of the grapes being a matter of his youth—but the marks of the beautiful toil were on them all.

Madeleine, always on leave for the *vendange*, from an indulgent mistress, stood before him ravishingly lovely as a bacchante, with hands and arms stained wine-red above her elbows, and smeared of wine on her cheeks and brow. Her flimsy, low-cut cotton frock was stained, and so, from touching hands, were her neck and bosom.

"*Mais tu es ravissante comme ça, mon enfant,*" cried Tombarel.

She laughed, showing teeth which flashed singularly white against the brown sunburn, and the wine smeared on her face.

"If I please Monsieur le Maire, I am more than content."

Tombarel took the purple-stained, squat, semi-shaven Père Capenas aside, to arrange the business on which he had come—help in his own grape-picking. For in these idyllic, primitive countries, everybody helps everybody else. My people pick for you on such and such days; your people pick for me on such and such other days. On no two vineyards do the days of perfect growth synchronize. So it is all a matter of friendly arrangement.

There they were, gathered together in the half broken-down shed, once the workroom of Silvestre Capenas, joiner and carpenter, and now a scene of lusty wine-making. At the back of the shed stood a row of vast hogheads, the sides four feet in diameter. In the middle was a splendid confusion of grapes piled high in baskets and on barrows, of busy humans dyed in dark red juice to their armpits, of grapes poured in to the great *pressoir*, worked by a man at each end of the lever of the screw, of mounds of pressed skins thrown aside for a second pressing. There was the continual squirt of red juice, and the tap of the pressing-vat into the crude wooden receptacle which, when filled, was passed into the vats; and the air reeked with the acrid, joyous smell of the must.

"Monsieur Tombarel," said Père Capenas, when their arrangements were concluded, "I am not happy. Why should Madeleine not marry Ferdinand Guil? Monsieur Guil was my best customer, and he no longer buys my wine. It is a great grief to me. Listen, Monsieur le Maire, couldn't you go with a proposition to Monsieur Guil? Madeleine is not a peasant girl without education."

He looked around cautiously, and tapped Tombarel on the shoulder and whispered: "She plays the piano. *Voilà . . . Eh, bien.* I give a dowry of thirty thousand francs, and I sign a paper—Louis and Celestine, her mother, agree—that the marriage shall be in *communauté de biens*, so that he will have equal rights in the domaine when Louis and I are dead."

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"But there is always Madeleine herself," Tombarel objected.

"You will talk to her, too, Monsieur le Maire. Surely it is better for her to marry a rich man, in her own country, than some rascally *valet de chambre* of Paris. Ah!"—he sighed—"it all keeps me from sleeping."

So Tombarel took the wine-stained bacchante into the fresh air and talked to her persuasively.

"Isn't this better than Paris?"

"Mon Dieu, yes." She looked at her hands and arms and smelt them. "*Oui, c'est moi, ça.*"

"Then why not?" urged Tombarel.

They were sitting on the rude bench where I had first seen the invalid Louis. She leaned forward, her elbow on her knees, her dyed hands against her cheeks, and stared away across the shadows of the gorge opposite, cast by the mild October sun. A strange sadness and weariness crept into her eyes.

"Well, perhaps. I don't say yes. I don't say no. Let them try to arrange things and I will see."

Tombarel went to the Guils and broke down much of their opposition. That evening Ferdinand and Madeleine sat together in the moonlight on the Pointe de l'Abime, where the war memorial trumpeter gleams white, leaning forward over the abyss in the eagerness of his eternal call.

Soon afterwards she returned to Paris; came back at the New Year for a few days. There was a kind of engagement; for she demanded a year in which to make her final decision. The elder Guils, hoping for the worst, assented; the Capenas family and Ferdinand also assented, hoping for the best. Young Guil certainly was a devout lover.

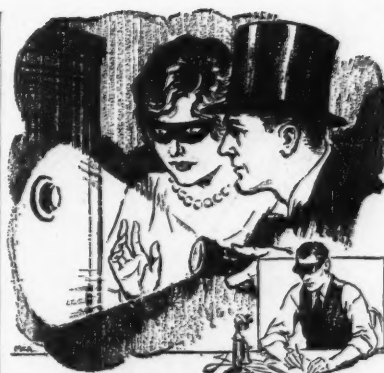
We come now to the Latin telegram which had summoned Tombarel, the Patriarch, to Paris.

Tombarel went to the hotel mentioned by Ferdinand, in a street off the Boulevard Sebastopol, where his father had always stayed, and in a very smelly room had found a semilunatic young man. And the young man had a disastrous story to tell.

For the first time in his life he had taken his father's place on the yearly business visit to Paris, whereby the flourishing *Arcades de Creille* was kept up-to-date. He had looked around the great shops, visited wholesale firms and given his orders, and the affairs of the *Arcades de Creille* being settled for the day, had given himself up to the bewilderment of the city. Only one thing was lacking—the sight of Madeleine. She must go to Biarritz with her mistress—so she had written—the day before his announced arrival. It was desolating, but life without patches of desolation would be a purposeless thing, devoid of interest or desire. There were also many things in Paris to console the passionate pilgrim, if he took the trouble to look for them. Madeleine's letters always were flavored with a spice of literary epigram; she wrote the hand of a lady of high cultivation, and, of course, used her mistress's heavy and expensive stationery.

Ferdinand sighed, but surrendered to the inevitable. For two nights he wandered abroad in search of adventure. As he went to the Comédie Française and the Opéra, he was scarcely successful. But he walked back to the hotel of the Boulevard Sebastopol with throbbing pulses. The broad thoroughfares of Paris, to say nothing of minor streets, being haunted with manifold dangers, he had been provided by his father with the old family six-barreled revolver, and counseled always to carry it in his hip pocket. It was both illegal and uncomfortable, but it enabled Ferdinand to carry his head high amid unsuspected perils.

Now it chanced that one Hippolyte Dubois, a dashing young man with whom he had business relations, undertook one evening to show him Paris as it ought to be viewed. Not only was Ferdinand Guil a good customer worth encouragement, but it is in human nature for the sophisticated townsman to delight in dazzling his provincial brother. They dined in



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the rue Royale. They went to a naughty little show in a naughty little theater, and thence to a famous cabaret in Montmartre, where a couple of pretty ladies, friends of Dubois, soon established themselves at the table.

Ferdinand had never drunk so much champagne in his life; he was proudly conscious too of his ready-made first dinner-jacket suit—he called it "un smoking"—which Dubois had prescribed as the only wear for such an evening. A beastly set of negroes made beastly noises on beastly instruments. On the glass floor couples gyrated to the intoxicating rhythm. Ferdinand, though he knew little about the art, caught up one of the pretty ladies and mingled with the swaying mob. Suddenly he was conscious of having bumped into a table next the dancing floor, and heard a man's angry, expostulating voice. He stopped and saw that his clumsy impact had upset a bottle of champagne.

He was about to apologize, but the awkward words stuck in a dry throat. He could only stare. For, fronting him across the table, sat Madeleine Capenas.

It was a Madeleine such as he had never dreamed of in wildest dreams. A Madeleine as exquisitely gowned as any rich American or Englishwoman in the stuffy and glaring haunt. She wore pearls. She wore diamonds. On her pink-tipped fingers were rings, diamonds and emeralds. On the back of her chair behind her hung a chinchilla coat.

He gasped out: "Madeleine, *c'est toi!*"

She regarded him stonily and turned to one of her two men companions.

"Alfred, what does this gentleman want?" The man rose and said in English: "Yes, what the devil are you getting at?"

A *mattre d'hôtel* sprang up beside the table. The pretty lady took matters in her own hands.

"We have spilled the champagne of *ces messieurs*. Of course we pay. *Combien?*" And then, to Ferdinand, when the price was mentioned: "Give two hundred francs to the *mattre d'hôtel*, and all is arranged."

Like a hypnotized man, Ferdinand drew the notes from his pocketbook. He was still staring at Madeleine.

"But, Madeleine, I am Ferdinand Guil." She shrugged her bare shoulders.

"*Je ne vous connais pas, monsieur.*"

"You'd better take him away; he seems to be drunk," said the English-speaking man in bad French.

"*Viens, mon ami,*" said the pretty lady, and led the flabbergasted youth to Dubois's table.

Of course he had drunk far too much champagne. But he was sober enough to know that no mistake had been possible. He repeated two or three times over:

"But when I tell you she comes from my own town, and she is Madeleine Capenas, my fiancée."

The pretty lady laughed. She appealed to Dubois and her friend.

"But tell Monsieur who she is."

And all three told him at once. She was the most successful and wealthy demi-mondaine in Paris. Kings and princes and millionaire bootleggers and ambassadors were at her feet. Had he never heard of Florida de Saules?

"Saules—Saules?" . . . Ferdinand clapped hands to a confused head. "But that is her mistress. She is *femme de chambre* to Madame de Saules."

The pretty lady pointed: "*Celle-là une femme de chambre!*" and all broke into disconcerting laughter.

"Who would believe it?" cried Tombarel, at this point of his story, bringing down his hand on the marble table. "Only one who has lived a long time in this amazing world where everything is possible."

Even I had heard of the famous Florida. Perhaps three or four hetærae in a generation, through their beauty and personality, make for themselves a strange semi-social status; and Florida de Saules was one of them. She had the gift of supremacy which in the social world has ever been a romantic condonation.

She ranked with Aspasia and Phryne and Diane de Poitiers and Ninon de Lenclos and the Du Barry, and such-like, whose mention causes no hand to be lifted to the most puritanical ears.

And I, without knowing it, had seen with my own eyes La Belle Floria—such was her general appellation—carrying house refuse in a tin vessel . . .

Tombarel's voice aroused me from bewilderment.

Poor Ferdinand, of course, had never heard of Florida. How should he, in his little shop in the heart of the Alpes Maritimes? But he knew that the glittering woman was Madeleine Capenas . . . He could stay no longer in the clashing, flashing, torturing cabaret. He made some kind of leave-taking, sought hat and coat, and found himself in the cold air outside.

And, in the cold, his semi-drunken brain concentrated itself on one idea. He must have speech with Madeleine, no matter at what cost. Her fame, such as it was, mattered nothing to him since, for appreciation of it, he had not the worldly equipment. But his soul was racked with the horror of her profession. His old seminarist training made him picture her as the scarlet woman, abhorrent to mankind. His instincts as mere man revolted at outrage. He had spent his life in the worship of the Divinity of Hell.

He lurked about in the shadows on the opposite side of the way. There was a ceaseless stream of arrivals and departures. Automobiles drew up in the glare of the entrance. From or into them stepped the monotonous succession of men in evening dress and fair women who were merely a phantasmagoria of furs and cloaks and long silk-stockinged legs.

At last Madeleine appeared at the doorway, attended by the two men. A car drew up. She entered it while the two men stood bareheaded in respectful leave-taking. The car moved away.

He drew a long breath. At any rate she was alone.

His brain worked with amazing swiftness. He jumped into a taxi, gave the address of Madame de Saules, and promised the driver insane money if he would drive at the reckless speed of one to whom immediate arrival is a question of life and death.

"Was that quick enough?" asked the driver when he drew up at the indicated number in the avenue off the Champs Élysées.

To a sober man it would have been a journey in some nightmare racing-car; but Ferdinand, an insignificant little figure, below the electric standard, rubbed confused eyes.

"I've gained my hundred francs," said the man.

Ferdinand drew the note from his case. French sense of thrift had faded from his mind in face of the compelling idea.

"*Merci, mon prince,*" said the driver.

Ferdinand waited. He had sense enough to know that no private car would have traversed Paris at that ghastly speed. She was alone. At this hour of the night she must come home. It was beyond reason to imagine her going elsewhere. He waited.

He argued rightly. Presently the car drove up. The chauffeur jumped from the seat, took off his cap—Ferdinand almost laughed at the idea of everybody baring their heads before Madeleine Capenas—helped her out, and rang the bell of the stately house. She turned and dismissed him. Ferdinand heard her say: "Tomorrow at eleven." And the chauffeur: "*Bien, madame.*" The chauffeur swung back into his seat. The door was opened. Ferdinand darted from the shadow and stood beside her.

"*C'est moi!*"

She drew herself up for a moment, rigid. Then she said: "So I see. Come up with me and we can talk."

The lift took them up into an apartment of luxury such as Ferdinand Guil had never conceived possible as existing in human habitation. There seemed to be endless rooms of

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Now, what talk took place between them I can't tell you. I am only repeating what I can remember of what Tombarel gathered from the terrified ravings of the lunatic young man.

In all human probability the conversation could be summarized in a final speech of the lady.

"This is what I am. This is my life. What have you to say to it? To make peace at Creille I took a year to decide whether I should marry you. The year is not yet up. You have no right over me."

And he: "You have basely deceived me and my family and your family and all the honest folk in Creille."

Whereupon he called her by many bad names, and, drawing from his hip pocket the old revolver, fired.

She screamed and fell. He stood over her for a minute, dazed, and then, all of a sudden, most torturingly sober. Panic seized him. He dropped the revolver, fled like a hare through the flat door, down the stairs and into the quiet, moonlit avenue. . . . He had a vague memory, when he talked to Tombarel, of walking all night to the hotel off the Boulevard Sebastopol.

"And there I found him," said Tombarel, "a shivering wreck, in bed. He had not even dared look at the newspaper to see whether the murder was reported."

"I've seen nothing in the papers," said I. "Nor I," said Tombarel. "As soon as I heard what had happened, I left the crazy Ferdinand and went to the apartment of Madame de Saules. Now, see what is droll in this story, my friend. The door was opened by a man servant—a *larbin* of the old school, yellow waistcoat with buttons, white side-whiskers, the manners of an ambassador."

He narrated the dialog.

"It is here, Madame de Saules?"

"Mais oui, monsieur."

"Could I see her?"

"Your name, monsieur?"

Tombarel gave him his card. He also announced himself, Monsieur Alcide Tombarel, Maire de Creille.

The butler said: "*Mais, monsieur, Madame is always at Biarritz.*"

"And her maid?"

"Naturally with Madame."

"Could you tell me where Madame is staying at Biarritz?"

"All communications addressed here will be immediately forwarded to Madame."

There was nothing more to be said. The old family man servant was verity incarnate. Tombarel went away.

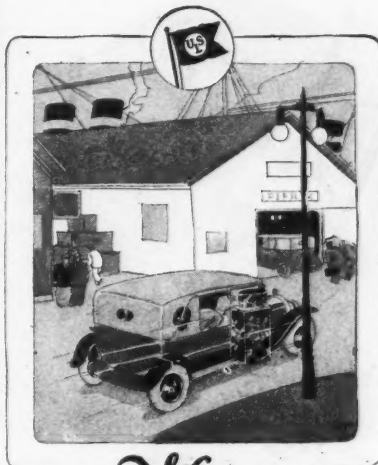
"That's how it is," said Tombarel. "Is the young Ferdinand mad, or isn't he?"

"Where is he now?"

"As I told you, in the clinic of my friend, Doctor Isnard, where he will remain until I can see things more clearly. I go now to Creille, where I will make vague explanations. They will believe me. That is the only comfort of my official position. I am a slave, at the beck and call of everyone. It's a dog's life. But, after all, if I say that so and so is so, they must believe that so and so is so. Otherwise they must choose another mayor. And"—he flicked his fingers at me—"as long as I'm alive I'm the only Mayor of Creille. But I'm more nearly dead now than I've ever been in my life."

He leaned back, very pinched and white and old. Two nights in a crowded railway carriage, and a day and a half's concern with a scared young murderer or madman, had been more than even Tombarel's old toughness could stand. I ordered some brandy, which revived him a little. But I saw that he was not fit to drive his little yellow car over the mountains to Creille.

"Listen," said I. "I'll take you in my car to Creille, and my chauffeur can bring yours along too."



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At first he wouldn't hear of so preposterous a suggestion. He had all kinds of pride, had Tombarel. Eventually he consented. When I pulled up at his door, he was fast asleep.

That I should stand at his threshold and depart without accepting some token of hospitality was impossible. He professed himself fully rested, made me enter the long low-ceilinged sitting-room with its austere polished Provençal furniture, and sent Angélique, the old servant, for adequate refreshment. We sat down to the ancient pale golden "*marc de Bourgogne*" which he shared with none but me. In fact, his order had been: "*Le vieux marc de Monsieur.*"

"The devil of it is," said he, after a while, "that I must see the Guils and make up some story to account for Ferdinand."

"That will do tomorrow morning," said I. "One thing is certain. If the famous Floria de Saules was murdered two or three nights ago, every paper in Paris would have nothing else on its pages."

"I think he's mad," said Tombarel.

It was dusk, and here in the Midi the twilight deepens very rapidly. Angélique came in to switch on lights and draw curtains. There was a ring at the front door-bell.

"*Oh, mon Dieu! Cela commence déjà,*" cried the harassed Mayor of Creille. "Show them in."

And a minute or two afterwards Angélique showed in Madeleine Capenas in an old print dress, with a black shawl slipping back from her head over her shoulders, and her arm in a sling.

She regarded me, somewhat taken aback, but inclined her head in recognition.

"I beg your pardon, Monsieur le Maire, but I heard your car and thought you were alone."

"I am on the point of departure, mademoiselle," said I. "I must get back to Cannes."

The Mayor of Creille glanced at her arm, met her lustrous and fearless eyes, and turned to me.

"You will do me the pleasure of remaining, monsieur." All the Presidency of the Republic of which he was but the tiniest fractional part spoke with indisputable authority. "You have come to say, Madeleine—"

"Something quite unimportant, Monsieur le Maire. I'll come back tomorrow morning."

"It is about your arm, doubtless, *mon enfant*? What has happened?"

"I found a little revolver in my mistress's drawer, and it looked dirty so I thought I would clean it. I didn't know that it was loaded, and ping! I got it in my arm. *Voilà!*"

"You had no quarrel, by any chance, with *le petit Ferdinand Guil*?"

She advanced a step or two tragically across the room to where we were standing.

"Then you know?"

"Mademoiselle Floria de Saules," said Tombarel, with a courtesy so grave that only a glint of irony was perceptible, "will you do me the honor to be seated?"

He advanced a chair. She crumpled down into it. "I'm at your mercy," she said in a low voice.

He patted her shoulder.

"My little Madeleine. I am your friend."

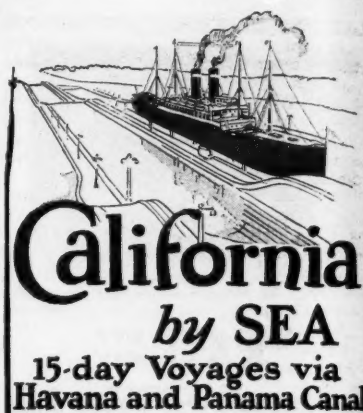
I was feeling exceedingly uncomfortable. Again I declared the necessity of my immediate return to Cannes.

Said Tombarel: "It is very desirable that there should be an honorable witness to the conversation between Madeleine and myself." He told her rapidly of our intimacy and his confidences.

"I see no reason, but I don't object," said Madeleine. "After all, perhaps Mr. Fontenay may not judge me as *la dernière des créatures*, which, after all, is something."

"I was summoned to Paris by Ferdinand. He told me his story. He was afraid he had killed you. Tell me yours." So Tombarel.

She sketched the events of the night very simply, confirming young Guil. A doctor summoned at once had extracted the bullet and done all that was necessary. . . . Naturally she had told Ferdinand she was in



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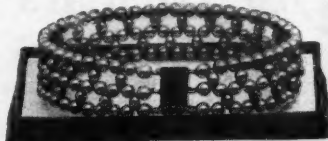
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Biarritz. Also naturally, when the *maitre d'hôtel* saw the card of the Maire de Creille, he repeated his orders; the orders of years among her servants. Nobody from Creille was to be admitted. When she learned that the Mayor had called, had asked not only for Madame but for the *femme de chambre*, she thought of some happening remote from the craziness of Ferdinand.

"It was one of *mes vieux* ill or dead," she cried. "What else could I do? I came straight to Nice by the Blue Train. I changed at the little hotel where I always transform myself from La Belle Floria to Madeleine Capenas, and I found my dear ones all well, except my father, who happened to have one of his bad fits—but nothing serious. That's why I came to see you, Monsieur le Maire."

You see, traveling in luxury, she had two or three hours' start of Tombarel.

At last she rose, and stood, her head thrown back, superb in tragic beauty.

"I must go. My father is ill. I must care for him. But what is going to happen? I am what I am, messieurs. My beauty, my weakness, my disillusionment, my anger, my ambition, my love of the beautiful things of life, my opportunity put me in my position. I'm proud of it. I don't care how many stones all the good people of the world throw at me. It's my choice. And with men I am honest. No man living can say I have wronged him. . . . I love my wealth and my luxury. I love the education I have received. I love music and painting and books and the talk of clever men and to feel my fingers on the pulses of life. And I have all that. I, Madeleine Capenas, the barefoot *gosse* of Creille who herded goats! And I've paid for it little more than many women of society who have married three or four husbands. . . .

"For I have loved—oui, messieurs—je ne me suis pas froidement vendue! I have lived. I am living. I have everything the earth can offer me. But for calamities sent by God, I shall never know poverty, although I am not thirty yet. But my heart is torn in two. Sometimes I ask myself: 'What is your true life? Paris and all that it means, or this little mountain top of Creille?' For my brain, my intelligence, my spiritual life, there is only Paris. But in my blood are our olives and our vines.

"And there are *grand père, père et mère*—the three who are in my blood too. I love them passionately. The roots of my life are ineradicably fixed in that little *mas* of ours. All that calls me. . . ." She swept a superb gesture with her free arm. "You, Monsieur Tombarel, have you ever doubted my devotion?"

"No, my child," said Tombarel, "but with your fortune—"

"Ah!" she cried, indignant. "It is not like you, Monsieur Tombarel, to talk such foolishness! I've strained the possibilities of what a *femme de chambre* of an indulgent mistress could give them. If they suspected that there was—let us call it—the wages of dishonor behind it, would they have accepted my money? No. You know very well they wouldn't. They would have wiped me out of their lives and would have starved. Three people, look you, all old—one my father, sick and helpless, living on the poor little patch of vine and olive! Now they are happy, without any cares. . . . They don't dream of a life of greater comfort. Am I right or am I wrong, Monsieur Tombarel?"

"You are perfectly right, my child," he said.

"And it's not a masquerade, when I come to Creille and live like them. It is because my blood and my happiness call me. You believe that too?"

"I believe it," said Tombarel.

"And now, what is going to happen when that little imbecile, Ferdinand, returns?"

"Ah!" said Tombarel, with outspread arms.

"You can tell him from me, Monsieur Tombarel, that if he says a word in Creille to destroy the happiness of my three down there—it is I, Madeleine Capenas, who will shoot him like a dog."

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Tombarel put his hand on her head in a patriarchal way.

"If there's any killing to be done, it is I who will do it. Leave things to me and have no fear."

But fate had taken things out of Tombarel's hands for the moment; for the scrunch of brakes broke the stillness outside the house.

"Who can that be?" he asked, startled, and went out to see.

We heard voices through the opened front door. A man shouted, needlessly loud:

"No, my good Tombarel. This young man has confessed everything. I'm not going to risk my reputation by being accessory after the fact of murder. So I return him to you. The poor boy is under a hallucination."

"But he's mad—fit to be tied," exclaimed Tombarel. "And, in any case, come in. *Toi aussi, Ferdinand.*"

The girl's eyes and mine met in a common flash of thought. Swiftly she threw the shawl around her, covering her left sling-hung arm, and stood with her back to the wall by the entrance door ironically defiant.

A stout little man, the Nice doctor, entered in indignant hurry, followed by Tombarel leading a pallid and crazy-looking youth.

"My friend, Monsieur Fontenay—Doctor Isnard."

We exchanged bows. Immediately afterwards, Ferdinand caught sight of Madeleine and staggered backwards like one who sees a ghost.

"Madeleine!"

"Eh, bien—what's the matter?"

"It's as I say, Doctor," said Tombarel. "*Ce pauvre garçon, il est fou à lier.* A lesion of the brain. This is the young person whom he had the illusion of murdering in Paris."

Madeleine put a hand to a bewildered forehead—I have always wondered at the Latin wit—but never so much as then—and assumed an air of perplexity.

"What are you talking about?"

All the shivering young man could do was to retort by another question.

"But—what are you doing here?"

"*Moi?* I had a telegram at Biarritz to say my father was very ill. I traveled all night. *Il crache du sang.* I just came to borrow some linen and little comforts from Monsieur le Maire."

"And you—with your story of meeting a lady in Paris, and killing her with revolver shots!" cried Tombarel with vehement gestures. "What does it all mean, save that you are mad? And I who speak?"—he thumped his breast so as to impress on his hearers that no one else but he was talking—"who went myself to the house of Madame de Saules, only to learn that Madame and her *femme de chambre*, Madeleine here, were always at Biarritz . . . What have you to say to it?"

"But again, what is it all about?" asked Madeleine. "*Je ne comprends rien du tout!*"

Tombarel sketched the situation in his vivid way. Fat little Docteur Isnard, very much bored, lighted a cigaret. He seemed still annoyed with Tombarel for having saddled him with Ferdinand.

Madeleine listened with varying shades of perplexity and indignation. At last she confronted the miserable Ferdinand.

"I, a cocotte! I, living in a great house with statues and automobiles! I, killed in a gilded drawing-room by a little nothing-at-all like you! But you're mad! And to drag Monsieur le Maire to Paris and back to tell him this cock-and-bull story . . . Ah, no! . . . Never again. You go drinking champagne in Paris with *filles de brasserie*, and you see someone who resembles me . . . and I don't know what happens . . . No, no, *mon petit*. It's finished between us. Go and tell your dear parents what you please . . . You can also tell them that I am *fiancée* to the chauffeur of Madame, and we're going to be married next month."

Ferdinand could only look from her to Tombarel and gape through the wall into bewildering space. Tombarel gripped him on the

shoulder and twisted him so as to get him face to face. There was a deadly, fascinating glitter in the old man's eyes.

"Young man, go home and reflect on the evils of drink and bad company. This time I pass your conduct by. But the next time I shall be merciless. And—listen well—if you breathe a word, even to your parents, of your hallucinations, I, in my quality of the Maire of Creille, and Docteur Isnard, will certify you as hopelessly insane, and you'll end your days in a madhouse. And now"—he conducted him to the door in his large way—"good night."

"Ouf!" said Madeleine, when he had disappeared. But her gesture of relief uncovered her wounded arm.

"What's that, mademoiselle?" Isnard asked quickly.

"A horse-fly bit me at Biarritz, monsieur. It's swollen and rather painful."

Tombarel dismissed her.

"Ask Angélique for all you want, *ma petite Madeleine*. And convey all my sympathy and friendship to your family."

He held the door open for her. She passed out, with a little salutation.

"*Bon soir, messieurs.*"

The fat doctor looked at his watch. Good Lord! he must get back to Nice. There was an important case . . .

"But, tell me, Tombarel. You don't give a man like me all this trouble for nothing. There's more in the affair than meets the eye."

"Precisely."

"Did the young man really shoot any woman in Paris?"

"I leave you to guess," said Tombarel.

When we were alone, Tombarel insisted on my dining with him. He summoned Angélique. Yes, there were soup and *écrevisses* (the delectable crayfish of the mountain streams) and a *pâté de foies gras*, and cheese and a salad—but if Monsieur Fontenay was dining she could easily kill a chicken. I banned the slaughter. What more delicious meal than the one sketched out could man desire, even in Paradise?

But Angélique went out discontented. She had her own singular way of cooking a freshly killed chicken.

"All's well that ends well," said Tombarel, passing his hand over his white mane.

"I hope it has ended well," said I. "But what if young Guiol talks?"

"He may talk when I am dead, but not before," said Tombarel.

We lighted cigarets. My special Turkish, which I import from Cairo, are Tombarel's passion, and he apologizes every time he smokes one. There was a few moments' silence. I was still under the spell of the fantastic bit of drama I had just witnessed.

At last I said:

"My dear friend, I've lived among you Latins for many years, and I love you; but my Anglo-Saxon mind will never be attuned to your notions of morality and truth. Somehow you've presented me with Madeleine Capenas, alias La Belle Floria, of world-wide notoriety, as a sort of heroine; you have put the fear of hell into the mind of a perfectly straight although unimportant young man who loved her, and, in order to do so, you and Madeleine have lied like the very devil."

Tombarel pondered a moment and, before speaking, waved his delicate fingers.

"Morals"—he flicked the things away—"are man-made canons of conduct; like a country's laws, which everyone breaks when it's safe to do so. But truth . . . truth is the divine, far-reaching vision of the human soul. And as far as my poor Latin intelligence can interpret that vision, it is truth that has come from my lips this evening."

"But supposing," I urged, "that Ferdinand Guiol had the character to defy you and the insanity bluff that you've put up, what would happen then?"

"He knows very well," said Tombarel, with a smile. "I would kill him, not only without hesitation, but with the greatest pleasure. We are mountain folk, my friend."

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